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LA COJA Y EL ENCOGIDO

A COMEDY

SPANISH AND ENGLISH

HARTZENBUSCH

away, Spanish - transmission lines

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Hartz

LA COJA Y EL ENCOGIDO

LA COJA Y EL ENCOGIDO

(The Lame Girl and the Bashful Man)

Comedia en tres Actos y en Prosa

Por J. E. HARTZENBUSCH

Traducida Literalmente y Anotada

para el

Estudio de la Buena Conversacion Española

Por

FLOYD B. WILSON, LL.D.

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La Caja y el Encogido

TO

Charles H. Twist

AND

Isidor Davidov,

MY ABLE AND LOYAL ASSOCIATES AND CO-WORKERS

IN THE OPENING UP OF THE WEALTH

OF THE GOLD ALLUVIONS OF TROPICAL AMERICA,

THIS VOLUME

IS DEDICATED IN TOKEN OF

APPRECIATION, FRIENDSHIP, AND ESTEEM.

FLOYD B. WILSON.

UR 19FEB'39

INTRODUCTION.

JUAN EUGENIO HARTZENBUSCH, the author of "La Coja y el Encogido," was the son of a German who resided in Madrid. He was born in 1806, and was regarded as one of the important members of that brilliant circle of literary men that adorned Madrid about the middle of the century just closed. He was educated in Spain, and in thought and feeling was wholly Spanish. Entering journalism shortly after completing his studies, he rapidly rose to prominence in that profession. As a literary critic, he particularly attained reputation before devoting himself to dramatic composition; and his wide acquaintance with general literature secured for him later the appointment of librarian of the national collection. His death did not occur till 1880, and his entire life may be said to have been devoted strictly to literature.

His dramas met with instantaneous success; and no one of the nineteenth century dramat-

ists obtained a stronger hold on the public than he. Among his popular dramas may be named, "The Mother of Pelayo," "Doña Mencia," "The Lovers of Teruel," and "The Lame Girl and the Bashful Man."

A few years ago I was asked by a publisher to translate this last named comedy into English; he advising me, at the same time, that no English translation of it had ever appeared. Being called to Spain on a legal matter just after I had completed this task, I left the proof-reading to others, and the limited edition published appeared in a most unsatisfactory form. That there is a desire now on the part of many to acquire conversational Spanish to meet the requirements of business our new possessions bring, is largely, doubtless, the occasion of another publisher's asking from me a retranslation. In itself, the comedy is delightful, and it is rich in Spanish idioms. It represents a type of plays that commands, at the present time, admiration in Spain. The dialogue is made up of the best and purest of conversational Spanish. After one has passed through a course, as given in Robinson's, Cortina's, Rosenthal's, or some similar text books, he will find that his vocabulary and mastery of idiomatic forms can be

greatly aided, without toilsome drudgery, by resting his eyes on the translation herein, and referring to the equivalent Spanish, from time to time, until memory is quickened to give the Spanish without the least prompting.

I have endeavored to present a literal translation as closely as seemed expedient. At times, this has been impossible, as I have tried, above all, to preserve the tone and spirit of the thought by giving equivalent English, when a literal translation would make the meaning either obscure or vague. The explanations in the notes, sometimes more elementary than the advanced student in Spanish would require, will, I trust, be found amply full to those who may have no acquaintance whatever with Spanish literature.

Were one to give a hasty glance at the rise and growth of the Spanish drama, he would find that, though Juan de la Encina, born in 1466, is called its founder, a century passed after his death before Spain could claim a great modern dramatic poet. Encina did not write dramas, but rather poetic dialogues. They were devoid of dramatic situations and incidents.

Cervantes came a century later, and he gave to the literature of his country, during the clos-

ing years of the sixteenth century, its first plays written in three journados or acts. Though he wrote a number of dramas, his literary reputation must always rest on his "Don Quixote," a great satire, and written, as he says in the prologue, "to show men the folly and absurdity of those stories contained in books of chivalry." Cervantes was contemporary with, and followed by a few dramatic writers, who, though of mediocre ability, shaped the way for the brilliant age of Spanish drama during the latter part of the sixteenth, and continuing through the seventeenth centuries, when its growth found its only parallel in that of the English drama during the same period.

Lope de Vega was born in 1562, two years before Shakespeare; and he died in 1635. During his eventful life, in spite of the fact that he was paid large sums of money for his plays, he was often involved in debt. In disposition, he was a pessimist. He closed one of his letters to his son thus: "Although I have written nine hundred comedies, twelve books in prose and verse, and many pieces on different subjects, I have gained only enemies, censors, envy, reproach, criticism, and mortifications; I have lost much precious time, and have naught to leave you but these useless counsels."

In spite of the fact that he thus addressed his son, he was always greatly petted by the Spanish public. His mind was quick to grasp, and prompt to execute. He frequently took orders to write a play one day, and presented it completed to the manager the day following. During his life-time, he wrote over eighteen hundred three-act plays, several hundred short stage pieces, five epic poems, several prose novels, and many sonnets and short poems. His dramatic characters were quick in action, as he in composing. The audience was not kept waiting to define the purpose or character of any one of his creations. French dramatic writers of renown have not hesitated to borrow whole scenes from his plays; and even Beaumont and Fletcher, as well as Dryden, did not scruple to appropriate largely from the same source. "The Star of Seville" is about the only drama of this dramatist that can be named as still holding its place on the Spanish stage.

Calderon came a little later, having been born in 1600. He developed his plots with more skill, but he was less original in invention. Calderon's life, unlike that of Lope de Vega, was devoid of incident. He early found favor with the theatre loving people; and Lope de Vega recognized his genius and

declared that, "he earned laurels which only time and hoary hairs were wont to bestow." Calderon was fond of brilliant stage effects; and, to attain this end, he frequently introduced Moors into his dramas, as their violent and jealous character gave special opportunity for dramatic situations. The depths of intrigue and jealousy revealed in many of his plays clearly indicate the degraded taste of the public at that period of history.

From the date of Calderon's death in 1681, a loss of originality and a general decay seemed to seize the Spanish drama. Its two greatest masters were gone. Philip, the Fifth, who ascended the throne in 1700 was essentially French, and he was inclined to introduce French manners into the Kingdom. Universal stagnation in literature followed. The Inquisition crushed free thought, and fettered intellect. The chivalric spirit of the nation could not assert itself in that atmosphere of restraint.

About fifty years later the Biscayan Society, headed by Nicolas de Moratin, introduced the French style of plot into Spanish drama; but plays constructed on these lines did not find favor with the public. A little later Juan Melendez Valdes and his associates founded the Salamanca School, and endeavored to re-

store in poetry and drama the nobleness, combined with the delicate grace, which had been for nearly two centuries the charm of Spanish literature. Josef Eglesias then gave Spain some of the daintiest of songs, and Leandro Fernandez de Moratin wrote a series of brilliant plays that reflected the modern spirit of Spanish life. Surrounding and following him were a number of dramatists and poets who won renown, and ushered in the modern Spanish drama, prior to the entrance upon the theatre of action of the author whose charming comedy, "La Coja y el Encogido" is published herein.

FLOYD B. WILSON.

New York, March, 1902.

PERSONAS.	PERSONS.
ADELA.	ADELA.
Don FABIAN.	Don FABIAN.
Don RUFINO.	Don RUFINO.
GREGORIA.	GREGORIA.
TOMASA.	TOMASA.
Don SILVESTRE.	Don SILVESTRE.
Un Criado.	Servant.

La escena es en Madrid en una casa de posadas.

The scene takes place in a boarding-house in Madrid.

ACTO PRIMERO.

Patio con jardin al cual tienen salida algunas habitaciones de huéspedes; á la derecha del espectador un ángulo del cuarto de Adela, con una ventana grande de frente al público. En medio del jardin un pozo, junto á él una pila, y por el medio bancos ó sillas y una mesa. Las persianas del cuarto de Adela están cerradas.

ESCENA PRIMERA.

D. FABIAN, GREGORIA, y luego TOMASA.

(*Gregoria aparece cruzando el teatro, de izquierda a derecha del espectador, con una bandeja y en ella varios platos; don Fabian sale*[1] *por la izquierda, detras de Gregoria.*)

FAB. Chit, chit, señora Gregoria.

GREG. ¡Don[2] Fabian! ¿Qué milagro es éste que se le ve á usted por el jardin? Desde que se halla usted aquí de huésped creo que es la primera vez que baja.

FAB. Si, señora, la primerita: figúrese usted que no será sin motivo.

ACT FIRST.

A Court with a garden, on which open some guests' chambers. At the right of the spectator is a corner of Adela's room, with a large window fronting the audience. In the middle of the garden, a well, next to it, a trough; and in the centre of the stage, benches, or chairs, and a table. The Venetian blinds of Adela's room are closed.

SCENE FIRST.

FABIAN, GREGORIA, and then, TOMASA.

(*Gregoria appears, with a waiter and several dishes on it, crossing the stage from left to right of the spectator. Fabian enters by the left, behind Gregoria.*)

FAB. Hush, Hush, Madam Gregoria.

GREG. Don Fabian! What miracle is this, that you are seen in the garden? I believe that this is the first time you have come down, since you became a guest here.

FAB. Yes, Madam, the very first, you may imagine that it can not be without a motive.

N Y P L

GREG. Pues ¿que hay? Diga usted pronto, que ando de prisa.

FAB. Está muy hermoso este jardinito del patio, y pocas casas la huéspedes tendrán [3] otro igual en Madrid; es muy agradable respirar por la mañana el olor de las flores. Pero, querida Gregoria, las diez y media han dado hace rato.[4]

GREG. ¡Las diez y media ya! ¡Y la nueva huéspeda queria el desayuno á las diez!

FAB. Si tuviera usted la bondad de acordarse del mio....

GREG. ¿Todavia está usted en ayunas?

FAB. Si, señora; por eso....

GREG. ¡Pobre don Fabian! Con esa calma, no es extraño que usted engorde.

FAB. Pues á pocos dias de abstinencia como éste, me quedo en lo firme.

GREG. Es el caso que me ha destinado el ama desde hoy á los cuartos de abajo, y por eso me toca servir á la señora que vino anoche; la Tomasa es la que tiene que asistirle á usted. Ahi sale: acu la usted á ella. (*Vase, y sale Tomasa en direccion opuesta, llevando tambien un almuerzo.*)

FAB. Tomasita, [5] ¿me hace usted el favor de subirme al cuarto el chocolate?

GREG. Well, why is it? Speak quickly, as I am in a hurry.

FAB. This little garden of the court is very pretty, and few boarding-houses in Madrid have another equal to it; it is very agreeable to breathe, in the morning, the odor of the flowers. But, dear Gregoria, it long ago struck half past ten.

GREG. Half past ten already! And the new guest wished her breakfast at ten.

FAB. If you would have the goodness to remember mine. . . .

GREG. Are you still fasting?

FAB. Yes, Madam; therefore . . . .

GREG. Poor Don Fabian! With that phlegm, it is not strange that you are growing fat.

FAB. Well, with a few days of abstinence like this, I will be reduced to a skeleton.

GREG. The fact is, that the landlady has assigned me from to-day to the rooms below; and, for this reason, I am obliged to wait upon the lady who came last night. Tomasa is the one who should wait upon you. Here she comes, ask her. (*She goes out, and Tomasa enters in the opposite direction, bearing also a breakfast.*)

TOM. Eso le tocará á la tia Gregoria, que es quien le ha servido á usted siempre.

FAB. Si me dice que le han encargado á usted la asistencia de arriba.

TOM. Anoche me dijo el ama los nombres de los huéspedes á quienes habia yo de servir desde hoy; pero lo que es á usted no le mentó A la cuenta seria un olvido.

FAB. Pues, uno de tantos.

TOM. Como usted no riñe nunca, ni habla, ni pabla, no hay forma de tenerle presente. Descuide usted; que yo le llevaré el almuerzo, en aviando á todos. (*Vase.*)

FAB. ¡Lisonjera distincion! Pues hasta ahora, gracias á Dios, he pagado mis tres pesetillas tan puntualmente como el primero. Debo irme de esta posada, y muy pronto. ¿Estamos en Mayo? Para ferias ó para navidad, me despido.[6]

FAB. Tomasita, will you please take my chocolate up to my room?

TOM. That belongs to Aunt Gregoria, who is the one that has always waited upon you.

FAB. But she tells me that they have commissioned you with the service of the upper apartments.

TOM. Last night the landlady gave me the names of the guests whom I had to wait upon from to-day, but she did not mention you. To my mind, there has been some forgetfulness.

FAB. Well, one among so many.

TOM. As you never quarrel, nor talk, nor scold, there is no occasion of having you present in mind. Don't mind, as I will bring your breakfast, after providing for the others. [*She goes out*].

FAB. Flattering distinction! Well, until now, thank God, I have paid my three little double reals as punctually as the best of them. I ought to leave this boarding-house, and soon. We are now in May. At the festivals, or at the very latest, Christmas, I will take my leave.

ESCENA II.

D. SILVESTRE, D. FABIAN.

SILV. No sé como he acertado á volverme por esas calles (*Viendo á don Fabian.*) ¡Hola! Felices dias, camarada.

FAB. Felicísimos. Beso á usted la mano.[7]

SILV. Usted, si no me equivoco, es el caballerito de anoche.

FAB. ¿De anoche? ¡Ah! si. Muy servidor de usted.

SILV. ¡Y tan servidor como usted se mostró! ¡Vaya, que fué buen lance! Cruza usted el portal cuando llegábamos la chica y yo, y los mozos acababan de dejar en el suelo nuestro equipaje; se me antoja que es usted un criado, cojo[8] un lio y se lo echo á usted á cuestas gritándole; "Marcha con eso adentro." No sé que fué más de admirar, mi torpeza ó la cachaza de usted, que se entró con el fardo como un corderito.

FAB. Me mandó usted con un aire tan imponente, que no me atreví á desobedecer.

SILV. De nuevo[9] le pido à usted mil perdones en mi nombre y en el de mi sobrina.

SCENE II.

DON SILVESTRE, DON FABIAN.

SILV. I don't know how I have succeeded in returning through these streets. [*Seeing Don Fabian*] Hello! Good morning, comrade.

FAB. A very happy good day! My compliments, sir!

SILV. You, if I am not mistaken, are the little gentleman of last night.

FAB. Of last night? Oh yes! Your servant, sir!

SILV. And I as much your servant as you have shown yourself mine. Well, what a good joke it was! You were crossing the portal when the young girl and I arrived, and the servants had just left our baggage on the floor. I got the idea that you were a servant, fetched a bundle, and threw it on your back shouting, "March in with this." I do not know which was most to be admired, my stupidity or your coolness, as you entered with the parcel like a lamb.

FAB. You commanded me with so imposing an air that I did not dare to disobey.

FAB. ¿Es sobrina de usted la señora que le acompañaba?

SILV. Sí, señor, una muchacha que vale un Perú.

FAB. ¿Con que es jóven? No tuve el gusto . . . . . el honor . . . . . de ver á la señorita. Sentada en un rincon oscuro . . . . y con aquel sombrero. . . . Yo, tambien, me subí corriendo á mi cuarto.

SILV. Ese es el de mi sobrina y mio, señor don. . . . ¿Como es su gracia de usted?

FAB. Me llamo . . . . me llaman. . . .

SILV. (*Interrumpiéndole.*) ¿Se le ha olvidado á usted su nombre?

FAB. ¡Por Dios![10] ¿còmo puede usted imaginar . . . . ?

SILV. (*Aparte.*) Se ha puesto colorado.[11]

FAB. Vea usted el registro de la patrona, ó pregúntele quien soy, y le responderá: "Fabian Huronera."

SILV. Muy señor mio: Silvestre y Adela Gomez están á la disposicion de usted, amigo don Fabian.

FAB. Haga[12] usted presentes mis respetos á la señorita.

SILV. (*Yéndose.*[13]) En hablándole recio al hombre, se le deja cortado. (*Vase.*)

SILV. Again, I ask you a thousand pardons, in my name, and in that of my niece.

FAB. Is the lady who acompanied you your niece?

SILV. Yes, sir; a girl that is worth a Peru.

FAB. Then she is young? I did not have the pleasure .... the honor of seeing the lady, seated in an obscure corner .... and with such a hat ... I, also, ran hastily up to my room.

SILV. That is the apartment of my niece and myself, Mr.—What is your name, please?

FAB. I am called ... They call me ....

SILV. (*Interrupting him.*) Have you forgotten your name?

FAB. For heaven's sake; how can you imagine....?

SILV. (*Aside*) He has blushed.

FAB. Examine the landlady's register, or ask her who I am, and she will respond, "FABIAN HURONERA."

SILV. My dear sir, Silvestre and Adela Gomez are at your service, friend Don Fabian.

FAB. Kindly present my compliments to the lady.

SILV. (*Going*) This man becomes embarrassed when one speaks to him loudly.

FAB. Well, if they had given me my choco-

FAB. Pues: si me hubieran dado mi chocolate, no hubiera tenido precision de bajar, y de hablar luego con un desconocido, que para me es el apuro mayor que hay. (*Encamínase á la izquierda, y tropieza con don Rufino, que sale por el mismo lado.*)

ESCENA III.

D. RUFINO, D. FABIAN.

RUF. ¡Eh! mire usted yor donde va.

FAB. Perdone usted . . . . una distraccion . . . . —¡Oh señor don Rufino!

RUF. Usted aquí, don Fabian!

FAB. Si vivo en esta casa.

RUF. Bien lo sé; pero como usted habita allá en las altas regiones. . . .

FAB. Un asuntillo urgente me ha sacado de mis casillas: á no ser[14] por la necesidad, no hubiera bajado.

RUF. Pues yo venia . . . . por supuesto[15] que con ánimo de ver á usted para tratar de nuestras cuentas,

FAB. Mil gracias.

RUF. Yo, que ántes era editor responsable, ahora soy propietario de un periódico.

FAB. Si usted es cuanto hay que ser,[16] cuanto quiere.

RUF. Para llegar á ser algo, hay que emprenderlo todo. Usted ha escrito para me, y es justo que se le remunere por su trabajo.

FAB. Cuando usted quiera.

late, I would not have been obliged to come down and then to speak with a stranger, which to me is the greatest affliction possible. (*Starting to the left, and stumbling upon Don Rufino, who enters on the same side.*)

SCENE III.

DON RUFINO, DON FABIAN.

RUF. Hello! take care—whither do you go?

FAB. Pardon—an absence of mind—O Don Rufino!

RUF. You here, Don Fabian!

FAB. Why, I live in this house.

RUF. I am well aware of it; but, as you live there, in the high regions . . . .

FAB. A rather urgent matter has drawn me out of my room; I would not have come down except from necessity.

RUF. Well then, I came . . . of course with the intention of seeing you, in order to speak about our accounts.

FAB. A thousand thanks.

RUF. I, who was before responsible editor, am now proprietor of a newspaper.

FAB. Well, you are all that a man can be—all that you wish to be.

RUF. In order to be something, it is necessary to undertake everything. You have written for me, and it is just that you should be remunerated for your work.

FAB. Whenever you please.

RUF. Pero ántes venia á tomar unos informes. Aqui sirve una vieja, llamada Gregoria, que fué ama de llaves[17] de mi papá, y queria que me dijera si ha venido ya una señorita de Cádiz, que habrá de parar en esta posada.

FAB. Esa señorita ¿viaja en compañia de su tio?

RUF. Justo: un hombre de edad, gordote, rechoncho. . . .

FAB. Que se llama don Silvestre.

RUF. Cabal, y ella Adelita.

FAB. Tio y sobrina llegaron sin novedad anoche, y ocupan ese cuarto.

RUF. ¿Ese? Bien.— ¿Y qué tal es la gaditana?

FAB. Yo entraba en casa cuando llegaron; pero no reparé en ella.

RUF. Mal hecho: en las mujeres se debe reparar siempre. Cuidado que usted, por su maldito encogimiento, no sirve para nada.[18]

FAB. Pues, sin embargo, hice á esos señores[19] anoche un servício.

RUF. ¿A la sobrina?

FAB. Al tio.

RUF. El tio me importa á mí dos bledos.[20] En fin, Gregoria habrá visto y me dirá. . . .

FAB. Ella los sirve.

RUF. But first, I come to obtain some information. An old woman serves here called Gregoria, who was housekeeper for my father; and I desired her to tell me if a young lady from Cadiz, who should stop at this boarding-house, has arrived.

FAB. Does this young lady travel in company with her uncle?

RUF. Exactly—a man of years, stout, plump. . . .

FAB. Who is called Don Sylvestre.

RUF. Exactly, and she, Adela.

FAB. Uncle and niece arrived, without incident, last night, and occupy that apartment.

RUF. What? Good . . . . And how is the young lady of Cadiz?

FAB. I entered the house when they arrived, but did not scrutinize her.

RUF. That is bad. Women must always be scrutinized. The truth is that you, on account of your confounded bashfulness, are good for nothing.

FAB. However, last night I did a service to those people.

RUF. To the niece?

FAB. To the uncle.

RUF. I don't care two straws for the uncle. Surely, Gregoria will have seen them, and will tell me . . . .

FAB. She waits upon them.

RUF. Tengo una impaciencia de saber. . . .

FAB. Le interesa á usted mucho la nueva huéspeda.

RUF. Hay su por qué: y eso que todavía no la conozco.

FAB. Sabrá usted quizá que es bonita.

RUF. Segun noticias es persona de lindo talle, de mucho garbo, mucha gracia para andar . . . . Ya se ve,[21] gaditana.

FAB. Tendrá la sal del mundo.

RUF. Pero es bizca; y yo aborrezco á los bizcos de muerte.

FAB. Entónces . . . .

RUF. La madre de Adela tuvo una hermana que casó con un tio mio, el cual pasó de España al Perú, donde hizo un mediano caudal.

FAB. De modo que Adelita y usted son primos políticos.[22]

RUF. Si, señor. Del tal tio hacia veinte años que nadie sabia nada, cuando al buen señor le ocurrió la idea de morirse, habiendo sobrevivido á hijos y mujer.

FAB. Ocurrencia feliz para usted, si testó á favor de la parentela.

RUF. Testó en efecto; y al parecer fué su ánimo beneficiar igualmente á su linea y á la de su esposa.

FAB. Si ustedes no son muchos . . . .

RUF. I am very impatient to know . . . .

FAB. You care much for the new guest.

RUF. There is a reason why; and yet, up to this moment I do not know her.

FAB. Perhaps you may know that she is pretty.

RUF. As far as reports go, she is a person of handsome figure, very elegant, very graceful in walking . . . . That is natural, from Cadiz.

FAB. She is the most graceful creature in the world.

RUF. But she is cross-eyed, and I abhor to death cross-eyed people.

FAB. Then . . . .

RUF. Adela's mother had a sister who married with an uncle of mine, who went from Spain to Peru, where he accumulated a modest fortune.

FAB. So that Adela and you are cousins.

RUF. Yes, sir. Twenty years passed and no one knew anything of the said uncle, when the idea of dying occurred to the good gentleman, he having survived his wife and children.

FAB. A happy idea for you, if he made a will in favor of his kindred.

RUF. He made a will in fact; and it appears it was his intention to benefit equally his kindred and his wife's.

FAB. If you are not many . . . .

RUF. Por parte de la tia; no más que Adela; por pàrte del tio, solito yo. Otro primo lejano habia tambien por mi lado; pero murió al concluirse la guerra civil.

FAB. Siendo así, Adelita y usted partirán á medias la herencia.

RUF. La idea del tio indiano fué que la disfrutaran en comun dos de sus parientes y afines, hembra y varon, á favor de una boda.

FAB. Es decir que casándose usted con su prima, se alza con el santo y la limosna.[23]

RUF. El alzamiento con respecto á la prima no lo ambiciono.

FAB. Puede ser una jóven amable; puede quererle á usted mucho.

RUF. Nunca podrá mirarme con buenos ojos.[24]

FAB. Esa nueva operacion de tenotomía aplicada al estrabismo prueba muy bien.

RUF. Yo no tengo vocacion de casado.

FAB. En el corto tiempo que hace que nos conocemos, le he oido á usted decir alguna vez que era enemigo del matrimonio; pero yo creia que habia usted mudado de dictámen.

RUF. ¿Como? ¿Qué significa eso? ¿Qué sabe usted para?

FAB. Serán suposiciones.

RUF. On the aunt's side, only Adela; on the uncle's side, myself alone. There was also another distant cousin on my side, but he died at the termination of the civil war.

FAB. This being so, Adela and you will divide the inheritance.

RUF. The idea of the Indian uncle was that two of his kin and relatives, male and female, should enjoy it in common through a marriage.

FAB. That is to say, that if you marry your cousin you will seize the saint and the alms.

RUF. I have no ambition for seizing my cousin.

FAB. She may be an amiable young lady; perhaps she will love you dearly.

RUF. She will never be able to look at me with good eyes.

FAB. The new operation of tenotomy applied to strabismus has given good results.

RUF. Marriage is not my vocation.

FAB. In the short time that has passed since we knew each other, I have frequently heard you say that you were an enemy of marriage; but I thought you had changed your opinion.

RUF. How? What do you mean? What do you know?

FAB. Perhaps they are false reports.

RUF. Pero hable usted.

FAB. Nada, sino que paseandome por la orilla del canal, porque mis paseos siempre son. . . .

RUF, Sí, por donde Cristo dió las tres voces.[25] Prosiga usted.

FAB. Iban delante de mí unos cuantos jóvenes, que parecian como libreros ó cajistas . . . . y hablaban de usted.

RUF. Mal, por supuesto, porque esa gente. . . .

FAB. No, señor, muy bien . . . . Decian que usted no entendia una jota del arte.

RUF. ¡Buen elojio!

FAB. Pero que por lo mismo era usted mas fácil de contentar.

RUF. Sí, de engañar. ¡Bribones!

FAB. Decian que pagaba usted bien, que tenia dinero. . . .

RUF. ¡Qué calumnia!

FAB. Y que seria usted pronto un sujeto rico.

RUF. Porque mi empresa prosperaria.

FAB. No: porque iba usted á casarse con una señora millonaria y . . . .

RUF. Y vieja: ¿No es verdad?

FAB. Precisamente.

RUF. But, speak.

FAB. Nothing, only that walking by the bank of the canal, because my walks always are . . . .

RUF. Yes, where Christ uttered his three shouts. Go on.

FAB. Several young men who appeared to be booksellers or compositors were walking before me, and they spoke of you.

RUF. Badly, of course, because, these people . . . .

FAB. No, sir, very well . . . . they were saying that you did not understand a jot of the art.

RUF. A good compliment indeed!

FAB. But that, for the same reason, you were the more easily satisfied.

RUF. Yes, to be cheated—the rascals.

FAB. They said that you paid promptly, that you had money . . . .

RUF. What calumny!

FAB. And that soon you would be a rich man.

RUF. Because my enterprise would prosper.

FAB. No, because you were going to be married to a millionaire lady, and . . . .

RUF. And an old lady; is it not so?

FAB. Precisely.

RUF. No haga usted caso de habladurías. Hay gentes que no viven si no divulgan todo lo que pasa. No porque eso tenga nada de particular: seria una especulacion como otra cualquiera; pero.... ¡Yo dinero! ¡yo pagar bien! Dígame usted si no le estoy debiendo los artículos que me ha redactado.

FAB. Verdad es, y por cierto [26]....

RUF. Ese periodiquillo miserable que he puesto, lo sostengo con dinero prestado.

FAB. ¡Dichoso el hombre á quien le prestan!

RUF. Créame usted; no vuelva usted á pasearse por la pradera del canal: corre allí un aire húmedo muy perjudicial á la gente de letras. Pasemos á la fonda de enfrente, y miéntras se hace hora de visitar á mi prima, le enteraré á usted de un pensamiento para mejorar mi periódico, en el que cuento con el auxilio de usted. Podremos tomar algo, porque usted es madrugador y hará ya tiempo que se ha desayunado.

FAB. No, señor, hoy me ha hecho esperar la criada más que otros dias.

RUF. En haciéndose de miel, se burlan de uno criados y impresores. Ea, vamos.

FAB. No concurro allí nunca, y así, como que me repugna entrar.

RUF. Sacuda usted ese encogimiento, visite

RUF. Pay no attention to prattle. There are people who could not live without divulging all that is passing. Not because it may be anything strange, but that it would be a speculation, like any other. But—I, money! I, to pay well! Tell me if I am not owing you for the articles which you have written for me?

FAB. True, indeed, and therefore . . . .

RUF. I carry on this miserable little paper which I have published with borrowed money.

FAB. Happy the man to whom any one lends.

RUF. Believe me, walk no more by the bank of the canal. A damp air blows there very injurious to literary men. Let us go to the nearest restaurant on the opposite side; and, until the hour of visiting my cousin arrives, I will acquaint you with an idea I have of improving my paper, and for carrying it out I rely on your aid. We can take something, because you are an early riser, and it is already time for you to have breakfasted.

FAB. No, sir, to-day the servant has made me wait longer than usual.

RUF. When a man is made of honey he is laughed at by servants and printers. Come, let us go.

FAB. I never go there, and so it is somewhat repulsive for me to go in.

RUF. Shake off this bashfulness, visit, con-

usted, converse usted: al mes de práctica habrá usted adquirido igual desembarazo que yo.

FAB. Sí á los ocho dias habré cometido tantas atrocidades, que ya no me atreveré á saludar á un alma viviente. Si no ha producido Asturias un hijo más cuitado que yo. Cuando estudié latinidad con el dómine, las primeras semanas no habia dia en que no llevase palmetas, á pesar de[27] que tenia buena memoria y estudiaba bien la leccion. Acercarme al maestro para darla, y ponerme á temblar, todo era uno:[28] así es que me cogia tantos puntos como veces me miraba. Durante el curso era yo de los más adelantaditos de la clase; el dia de los exámenes siempre me quedaba de burro. En la universidad, lo mismo: en habiendo acto público, perdia á vista de una concurrencia numerosa todo el concepto que me habia granjeado mi aplicacion entre los catedráticos y los compañeros. Por eso no me he atrevido á graduarme en leyes,[29] porque estoy seguro que si el dia de mañana me tocara defender la causa de un hombre más inocente que el mismo Abel,[30] de fijo con mi defensa iba derecho al palo.

RUF. Por eso le predico á usted: miéntras no venza ese empacho ridículo, se reirán de usted hombres y mujeres.

verse; after a month's practice you will have acquired boldness equal to mine.

FAB. Yes, within eight days I shall have committed so many atrocious acts that I will not dare to salute a living soul. Indeed, Asturias has not produced a son more timid than myself. When I studied Latin with the master, a day did not pass during the first weeks on which I did not receive a beating, in spite of the fact that I had a good memory and studied the lesson well. To approach the master to recite, and to find myself trembling was the same thing, so of course I was caught in failure as often as he looked at me. During the course, I was among the most forward of the class; the day of the examination I always appeared a donkey. In the university, the same; when there was a public act, I lost, at sight of a large assembly, all the high opinion which I had earned among the professors and students on account of my application. That is why I have not dared to take my degree in law; because I am sure, that if to-morrow it fell to my share to defend the cause of a man even more innocent than Abel himself, assuredly, with my defense, he would go straight to the gallows.

RUF. Because of this I am preaching to you; until you overcome this ridiculous timidity men and women will laugh at you.

FAB. Las señoras hasta hoy poco se han burlado de mí.

RUF. ¿Ha sido usted más afortunado con ellas?

FAB. No, sino que como la primera y la segunda y la tercera me han escarmentado, no me he atrevido á emprender con la cuarta.

RUF. Usted debe principiar á franquearse con las personas á quienes trata.

FAB. No me trato con nadie. Usted y otro compañero suyo que me dan que escribir, y el muchacho de la imprenta que me trae las pruebas, son casi las únicas personas que veo, y eso de tarde en tarde.

RUF. Pues principie usted á desenfadarse conmigo.

FAB. (*Aparte*) ¡Famosa ocasion para pedirle lo que me debe!

RUF. Y marchemos ahora á la fonda.

FAB. Señor don Rufino, tomando su consejo de usted, quisiera....

RUF. Café primero con tostadas, ¿no?

FAB. Quisiera[31] hacerle á usted presente....

RUF. Luego unas chuletas ó un bifteck.

FAB. Usted no extrañará que en mi situacion...

RUF. Si prefiere usted una trucha ó jamon dulce....

FAB. Yo trabajo noche y dia....

FAB. The ladies, until now, have laughed at me very little.

RUF. Have you been more fortunate with them?

FAB. No, but as the first, and the second, and the third have warned me, I dared not undertake the fourth.

RUF. You ought to begin to be more free with the persons with whom you associate.

FAB. I associate with no one. You and your other companion who give me material for writing, and the boy from the printing-office who brings me the proofs, are almost the only persons that I see, and even them at long intervals only.

RUF. Well, you may begin by speaking freely with me.

FAB. [*Aside*] A splendid occasion for asking him for what he owes me!

RUF. And let us walk now to the restaurant.

FAB. Don Rufino, taking your advice, I desire . . . .

RUF. Coffee first, with toast, no?

FAB. I desire to state to you . . . .

RUF. Then some chops, or a beefsteak.

FAB. You will not consider it strange that, in my situation . . . .

RUF. If you prefer trout, or sweet ham,

FAB. I work night and day . . . .

RUF. Eso es, noche y dia: y sin gozar jamás de una diversion, sin almorzar en fonda ni. . . . Hoy *debuta* usted.

FAB. Solo á fuerza de privaciones es como consigo. . . . [32]

RUF. Cierto: no faltarán en la fonda literatos jóvenes á quienes aconsejar que aprendan de usted.

FAB. Sin dinero no puede uno. . . .

RUF. Eso les diré yo: sin dinero no se puede vivir. ¿Quieren ustedes ganarlo? Trabajen ustedes como el señor, ¿Quieren ustedes no hallarse en apuros? Limítense ustedes como el señor. No vestirá con lujo; pero no deberá un cuarto: ántes le deberán á él. Yo le debo, señores; yo no me avergüenzo de confesarlo . . . .

FAB. Por lo mismo estimaria que usted. . . .

RUF. Yo miro por la gloria y adelantos de ustedes más que ustedes mismos. Los españoles pecamos por lo comun [33] de holgazanes; y si la necesidad no nos estimula, nos echamos á dormir. Por eso yo me hago á veces el remolon para pagar: claro es que el que no paga es porque no puede ó no quiere. Señor don Fabian, todas las obras de mérito se han escrito con hambre: usted se haya ahora en la mejor ocasion para hacer algo de provecho.[34]

RUF. That is so, night and day and without ever enjoying any diversion, without breakfasting in the restaurant, nor .... To-day, you make your debut.

FAB. It is only by force of privations that I obtain ....

RUF. Certainly, there are not wanting in the restaurant literary young men who should be advised to learn from you.

FAB. Without money, one is not able ....

RUF. So I will say to them; without money you cannot live. Do you wish to earn it? Work like this gentleman. Do you desire to find yourself not in want? Restrain yourself like this gentleman. He will not dress sumptuously, he will not even owe a cent; on the contrary, others will owe him. I owe him, gentlemen, and I am not ashamed to confess it.

FAB. For the same reason you would oblige me by ....

RUF. I care for glory and advancement more than you. The sin of us Spaniards generally is laziness; and, if necessity does not stimulate us, we indulge in sleep. For this reason I am sometimes a slow payer; it is clear that he who does not pay refuses, either because he cannot, or because he does not wish to pay. Don Fabian, all meritorious works have been written by force of hunger; you find yourself now in the best condition for doing something worthy.

FAB. (*Cortado*) Adopto la insinuacion de usted, y me retiro á ponerla en práctica.

RUF. ¿No almorzamos juntos?

FAB. Gracias por el convite y por el aviso, (*Aparte.*) Este hombre, para mí, aconseja como paga: siempre el resultado es igual á cero. (*Vase.*)

ESCENA IV.

D. RUFINO.

Ya me le he quitado de encima, y de balde.[35] Gastar algo con él, vaya; pero darle lo que le debo, hasta que me case no puede ser.[36] ¡Qué seria mejor? ¿casarme con la bizca ó con la vieja? La herencia del tio redituará unos dos mil duros anuales, á todo correr[37] los bienes de doña Gertrudis rentan seis veces mas: la vieja me ha adelantado cantidades enormes; ella paga todas mis trampas: ella poco puede vivir: si el matrimonio es un cautiverio, estoy por el mas breve; si es una especulacion, debo estar por la mas productiva. Despues de la Gertrudis, probablemente seré dueño de cuanto posee; y si quiero, podré escoger entre todas las niñas de Madrid que miren á derechas.[38] Veré á mi

FAB. [*Embarrassed*] I accept your suggestion, and retire to put it in practice.

RUF. Do we not breakfast together?

FAB. Thanks for the invitation, and for the advice . . . . (*Aside*) This man advises me as he pays; the result is always equal to zero. (*He goes out.*)

SCENE IV.

DON RUFINO.

RUF. Indeed I have got rid of him, and free of expense. To spend something with him, that will do; but to give him what I owe before my marriage is impossible. Which would be the better? To marry the old woman or the cross-eyed one? The inheritance of my uncle will yield some two thousand dollars annually, all told; the fortune of Miss Gertrude yields six times that amount; the old lady has loaned me enormous sums; she pays all my obligations; she can live but a short time; if matrimony is captivity, I am for the shortest; if it is a speculation, I prefer the most productive. After Gertrude's death, probably I will be master of whatever she possesses; and, if I wish, I can select from all the ladies of Madrid one who looks straight. I will see my cousin

prima y pensaremos; pero el caso es que hay que decidir de hoy á mañana. Lo primero es buscar á Gregoria. (*Vase.*)

ESCENA V.

Abrense las persianas del cuarto que ocupan ADELA y D. SILVESTRE, y aparecen los dos sentados á una mesita redonda, acabando de almorzar; GREGORIA les está sirviendo.

ADE. Sí; mejor está abierto, Gregoria. Ya que nadie nos ve, respiremos el aire fresco del jardinillo.

GREG. Si ustedes reparan en la asistencia algo[39] que no sea de su gusto, díganlo.

ADE. El té no me ha parecido bueno: cuando salga, he de ver si lo encuentro de mejor calidad.

SILV. ¿Habrá manzanilla[40] en casa, Gregoria?

GREG. Sí, señor; y si no, se traerá de la botica.

ADE. ¿De la botica?

GREG. Pues ¿de donde? En las boticas se halla de todo.

SILV. ¿Hasta el vino de Sanlúcar?

GREG. ¡Ah, que es un vino de su tierra de usted! Se lo preguntaré al ama.

SILV. Si, ve y no te vuelvas sin una cañita.[41] (*Vase Gregoria.*)

and think it over; but the fact is that it must be decided to-day or to-morrow. The first thing is to find Gregoria. [*He goes out.*]

SCENE V.

The Venetian blinds of the room which Adela and Don Silvestre occupy are opened, and the two appear seated at a little round table, finishing their breakfast. Gregoria is waiting on them.

ADE. Yes, it is better open, Gregoria. Since nobody may see us, we will breathe the fresh air of the little garden.

GREG. If you find anything in the service that may not be to your taste, mention it.

ADE. I do not find the tea good; when I go out I must see if I can find a better quality.

SILV. Have you Manzanilla wine in the house, Gregoria?

GREG. Yes, sir; and, if not, we will get it from the drug store.

ADE. From the drug store?

GREG. Naturally, from where? In the drug store every thing is found.

SILV. Even the wine of Sanlucar?

GREG. Ah, that is then a wine of your country! I will ask the landlady.

SILV. Yes, and see that you do not return without a glass of it. [*Gregoria goes out.*]

ESCENA VI.

ADELA, D. SILVESTRE.

SILV. Con que, sobrinita del alma, ya estás en Madrid, y supongo que hoy verás á tu primo político.[42]

ADE. ¿Quién sabe? Se le anunció el dia de nuestra llegada y no por eso ha salido á recibirnos. Infiero que tiene poquísimo deseo de conocer á su prima.

SILV. ¿Y tú?

ADE. Yo estoy resuelta á llevar á cabo mi plan; pero poco esperanzada en un feliz éxito.

SILV. ¿Aun no has visto al primo, y ya recelas de él?

ADE. Recuerde usted los informes que ha recogido esta mañana. En primer lugar le han dicho á usted que ha sido siempre una especie de vago.

SILV. No hay cosa mas noble que no trabajar.

ADE. Que es un tramposo, un petardista.

SILV. Pero sabe serlo:[43] solo engaña á ricos y á tontos.

SCENE VI.

ADELA, DON SILVESTRE.

SILV. Well, my darling niece, you are now in Madrid, and I suppose to-day you will see your cousin.

ADE. Who knows? The day of our arrival was announced to him, and, notwithstanding that, he has not come out to receive us. I infer that he has very little desire to be acquainted with his cousin.

SILV. And you?—

ADE. I am resolved to carry out my plan to the end; but hoping little for a happy termination.

SILV. You have not even seen your cousin, and yet you mistrust him?

ADE. Remember the information which you have obtained this morning. In the first place, you have been told that he was always a sort of a vagabond.

SILV. There is nothing more noble than not working.

ADE. He is a deceiver, a cheat.

SILV. But he knows how to be such; he only deceives the rich and fools.

ADE. Se susurra que galantea á una vieja.

SILV. Mejor se prendará de tí que eres jóven.

ADE. Es que yo no quiero que se prende de mí por ser jóven, ni por ser heredera, sino por ser mujer de bien . . . . y algo más.

SILV. Ese algo más comprende lo de amable[44] y discreta, lo de no ser ya bizca, etc., etc.

ADE. Yo le confieso á usted que vivo en una inquietud mortal hasta salir de mi experiencia.

SILV. Poco puede durar tu zozobra, porque el plazo urge.[45]

ADE. Sí: mi tio político[46] don Gabriel me instituyó su heredera absoluta, si en el término de un año me casaba con un pariente suyo.

SILV. Y si no, pasarian al pariente más inmediato los bienes del tio, quedándote solo una pension anual de seis mil reales.[47]

ADE. El buque que traia la primera copia del testamento padeció naufragio, el segundo perdió la derrota, y el tal documento ha venido á Europa por Lóndres, de Lóndres á Santander, y de allí á Madrid: de manera que[48] el año se cumple mañana.

SILV. Eso te excusa de cavilar mucho tiempo sobre la decision. Con decir: "Soy novia," está concluido.

ADE. It is whispered that he is courting an old woman.

SILV. The more will he get in love with you, from the fact that you are young.

ADE. I do not want him to get in love with me because I am young, nor because I am an heiress; but because I am an honest woman . . . and something more.

SILV. That something more comprises the qualities of amiability and discretion, the fact of not now being cross-eyed, etc., etc.

ADE. I confess to you that I live in mortal anxiety, until the completing of my experiment.

SILV. Your anxiety can continue but a short time, because the term is nearly ended.

ADE. Yes, my uncle Gabriel constituted me his heir absolutely; if, in the term of a year, I was married to a kin of his.

SILV. And, if not, the fortune of the uncle would pass to his nearest of kin, an annuity only remaining to you of six thousand reals.

ADE. The ship which bore the first copy of the will was wrecked, the second lost its course, and the said document has come to Europe through London, from London to Santander, and from there to Madrid; so that the year is completed to-morrow.

SILV. This prevents you from caviling very long upon your decision. By saying: "I am a bride," all is finished.

ADE. O con decir: "No me caso," y contentarme con esa corta pension.

SILV. No seria mal disparate. Mira que la mujer no suele tener más que[49] una ocasion para ser rica.

ADE. Ser rica, ser rica.... Bien me gustaria á mí serlo: aun soy jóven y ya no soy niña, y por consiguiente no me falta ambicion; pero esto de arriesgar una su felicidad por el vil interés....

SILV. Se[50] buena y serás feliz, lo mismo siendo rica que siendo pobre. Ya se ve:[51] tú quisieras que el tio te hubiera dejado sus bienes sin carga ninguna: muy bien querido; pero como él pensó de otro modo, no hay más que sujetarse á su voluntad. Considera tu situacion; tú no tienes mas arrimo que yo, y por mas que haga....

ADE. Tio, por Dios.... Usted tiene hijos y pocos medios; demasiado ha hecho con acompañarme á Madrid consintiendo en ser mi auxiliar y mi cómplice.

SILV. Los peligros de la opulencia no sé que tan grandes serán, porque nunca los he conocido; los de la pobreza sí, y te aconsejo que no te expongas á ellos. Mas virtud se necesita para vivir contenta con seis mil reales, que para corregir á un marido calavera,[52] te

ADE. Or by saying: "I will not marry," content myself with the scanty pension.

SILV. That would be sheer nonsense. Take note, that a woman has generally but one chance to become rich.

ADE. To be rich, to be rich . . . It would please me well to be so: although I am yet young, I am no more a child. Ambition consequently is not wanting in me, but to sacrifice one's happiness for a sordid interest . . . .

SILV. Be good and you will be happy whether you are rich or poor. It is clear, you could wish that your uncle had left you his fortune without any burden; very well wished, but as he thought otherwise, there is nothing but to subject yourself to his will. Consider your situation; you have no other protector than I, and however much I may do . . . .

ADE. Uncle, for heaven's sake . . . you have children and limited means; you have done even too much in accompanying me to Madrid, consenting to be my aid and accomplice.

SILV. I do not know how great the dangers of opulence may be, as I have never known them; those of poverty, yes, and I advise you not to expose yourself to them. It is necessary to have more virtue in order to live satisfied with six thousand reals a year, by one possess-

niendo las cualidades que tú. Y luego debes reflexionar que en el enlace de los dos herederos de don Gabriel el sacrificio es igual y recíproco. Tambien amará su libertad don Rufino, tambien le asustará su exterior, tambien mirará con repugnancia ese matrimonio, porque á todo el mundo[53] incomoda que le digan: "Con fulana te has de casar, ó te desheredo." A pesar de los informes que he recibido, yo formaré muy buena opinion de tu primo si conviene en casarse,[54] aunque no le vea muy enamorado: motivos tienes para estar segura de que despues, al aprecio, seguirá el amor.

ADE. No es tanto loque exijo yo por ahora: fuera un absurdo; pero con el galanteo de la vieja no puedo transigir.

SILV. Adelita, fuera de bromas: ¿has de jado en Cádiz algun quebradero de cabeza?[55]

ADE. ¡Tio! ¿No tiene usted mil pruebas de que mi corazon es libre?

SILV. Es verdad: y lo que es en Madrid, todavía. . . .

ADE. No he visto mas hombre que al huésped de anoche, cuya cortedad nos ha hecho reir tanto. ¿Como me ha dicho usted que se llama?

SILV. Don Fabian: para tí me ha dado memorias.

ing your qualities, than to correct a profligate husband. And besides, you ought to reflect, that in the union of the two heirs of Don Gabriel the sacrifice is equal and reciprocal. Don Rufino also must love his liberty, and your appearance will frighten him. Again, he must regard this marriage with aversion; because it is chafing to any one to be told: "You must marry such a one, or I will disinherit you." In spite of the reports which I have received, I will form a very good opinion of your cousin if he decides to marry you; although I may not see him very much in love, you have reason to be sure that afterward, love will follow esteem.

ADE. I do not exact much now, that would be absurd; but I cannot accommodate myself to his courting the old lady.

SILV. Adela, let us speak seriously; jesting aside, have you left in Cadiz some object of affection?

ADE. Uncle! Have you not a thousand proofs that my heart is free?

SILV. It is true; and, as relates to Madrid, yet ....

ADE. I have seen no man except the guest last night, whose bashfulness made us laugh so much. What did you tell me his name was?

SILV. Don Fabian: he has asked me to present his compliments to you.

ADE. Debe de ser un Juan Lanas[56] completo.

ESCENA VII.

GREGORIA, en el cuarto; Dichos.[57]

GREG. Aquí está la manzanilla, señor.

SILV. Ya no me acordaba yo de tal cosa; ya se me ha pasado la sed.

GREG. He tardado porque me ha detenido un caballero, preguntándome mil cosas de usted, señorita.

ADE. ¿De mí?

SILV. ¿Quién es?

ADE. ¿Es siquiera[58] el mozo de cordel que mi tio se improvisó anoche?

GREG. ¡Qué! No, señora, si es mi señorito: quiero decir, el hijo de un amo que tuve yo. Es don Rufino.

ADE. ¡Mi primo!

SILV. ¿Dónde anda,[59] que no viene?

GREG. Me dijo que le parecía aun temprano para visitar y que se alegraria infinito de verla á usted àntes de anunciarse como pariente.

ADE. ¡Oiga!

GREG. Me encargó que no le dijese á usted palabra, y por lo mismo se lo prevengo.

ADE. He must be a complete simpleton.

SCENE VII.

GREGORIA, in the room; AFORESAID PEOPLE.

GREG. Here is the Manzanilla wine, Sir.

SILV. Indeed, I do not remember of any such thing; thirst has now left me.

GREG. I have tarried because a gentleman detained me, asking a thousand things of you, Miss.

ADE. Of me?

SILV. Who is it?

ADE. It is probably the porter that my uncle improvised last night?

GREG. What! No, Miss, it is my master; I mean to say the son of a master that I had. It is Don Rufino.

ADE. My cousin!

SILV. Where is he, that he does not come?

GREG. He told me that it seemed to him too early to call, and that he would be infinitely pleased to see you before presenting himself as a relation.

ADE. Hear!

GREG. He enjoined me that I should not say a word to you; and, for the same reason, I give you warning.

ADE. ¿Y ha cumplido usted del propio modo el encargo que le hice á usted anoche?

GREG. ¿El de callar que usted no es bizca, síno que en cambio[60] . . . . ? ¡Vaya! no, señora: me he hecho la desentendida,[61] nada sabe.

SILV. ¿De veras?

GREG. A fé de quien soy. Las circunstancias de los encargos no son iguales: el señorito ha prometido regalarme y usted me regaló. (*Asomándose á la ventana.*) Allí viene ya.

ADE. Quite usted ese velador y retírense ustedes.

SILV. Yo me retiro, y voy á salir para dejarte el campo libre.

ADE. Sí, yo sola quiero entenderme con él. (*Vanse don Silvestre y Gregoria.*)

ADE. And have you fulfilled in the same way the charge that I gave you last night?

GREG. That of keeping silent that you are not cross-eyed, but that instead . . . . ? No, indeed, Madam, I have acted as if I knew nothing; he knows nothing.

SILV. In truth?

GREG. Upon my faith. The circumstances of the commission are not equal; the young gentleman has promised to make me a present, and you have done it. (*Looking out of the window.*) Here he comes now.

ADE. Take away this table, and withdraw.

SILV. I retire, and I am going to leave the field clear to you.

ADE. Yes, I wish to face him alone. (*Exeunt Don Silvestre and Gregoria.*)

ESCENA VIII.

D. RUFINO, en el patio; ADELA, á la ventana.

RUF. (*Aparte al salir*) [62] Segun dijo Gregoria, á la ventana debe estar.

ADE. (*Medio tapándose con una cortina.*) Aquel ha de ser. No me descontenta la traza.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) Entre la cortina distingo un bulto: ella será.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) Haremos la deshecha[63] á ver como se explica.

RUF. Señorita....

ADE. Caballero....

RUF. (*Aparte.*) (No es bizca: no es ella.) Disimule usted la libertad....

ADE. Hasta ahora no es grande.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) ¡Qué chusca! El cuarto de doña Adelita Gomez....

ADE. Es el mismo que ocupo yo.

RUF. ¿Este?

ADE. Pues.

RUF. Yo no sabia.... ¿Ha venido usted quizá con ella?

SCENE VIII.

DON RUFINO, in the court: ADELA, at the window.

RUF. (*Aside at entering.*) According to what Gregoria said, she ought to be at that window.

ADE. (*Half hiding herself with the curtain.*) That must be he. The invention does not displease me.

RUF. (*Aside.*) I observe a figure between the curtains; it must be she.

ADE. (*Aside.*) Let me keep in the shadow, to see what he says.

RUF. Miss . . . .

ADE. Sir . . . .

RUF. (*Aside.*) She is not cross-eyed; it is not she. (*Aloud.*) Excuse the liberty.

ADE. So far, it is not great.

RUF. (*Aside.*) How merry! (*Aloud.*) The room of Miss Adela Gomez . . . .

ADE. Is the same as the one I am occupying.

RUF. This?

ADE. Well.

RUF. I did not know . . . You have perhaps come with her?

ADE. Nunca me separo de su persona.

RUF. Formo un gran concepto de quien merece tan amable amiga.

ADE. ¿No conoce usted á Adela? Como usted preguntaba por ella, juzgué que sí.[64]

RUF. Nunca la he visto; pero tengo un dato para conocerla.

ADE. ¿Un dato, eh? Ya comprendo cuál.

RUF. Una señalita.

ADE. Un distintivo particular.

RUF. Una gracia, gratis data.

ADE. Que se nota al golpe,[65] cierto. ¿Usted quiere que la avise?

RUF. Es mi obligacion visitarla; pero temia que la hora fuese intempestiva.

ADE. Ella . . . . ocupada está, y bien, segun parece.

RUF. En el tocador acaso.

ADE. No, en conversacion con un caballero.

RUF. Siendo así, esperaré.

ADE. Pero nosotras no gastamos etiqueta: ya ve usted, el solo anuncio de que tiene usted relaciones con Adelita ha bastado para detenerme á hablar con usted desde una ventana, como si estuviera en Andalucia. ¿Se conversa en Madrid tambien por las rejas?[66]

RUF. Poco, porque apénas hay cuartos bajos.

ADE. Never am I separated from her person.

RUF. I form a high opinion of one who merits so amiable a friend.

ADE. Are you not acquainted with Adela? As you asked about her, I thought you were?

RUF. I have never seen her; but I have a mark for distinguishing her.

ADE. A mark, eh? I understand what.

RUF. A little sign.

ADE. A particular feature.

RUF. A grace, beside the feature.

ADE. Which is seen at once. Do you wish me to call her?

RUF. It is my duty to visit her; but I feared that the hour might be inopportune.

ADE. She . . . . is occupied; and well, as it appears.

RUF. In her toilet, perhaps?

ADE. No, in conversation with a gentleman.

RUF. That being so, I will wait.

ADE. But we don't stand upon etiquette. You can see that the single announcement that you were acquainted with Adela has sufficed to detain me to speak with you from a window, as if I were in Andalucia. Do they converse in Madrid also from the window railing?

RUF. Little, because there are scarcely any lower floors.

ADE. Diga usted, y debajo de los altos ¿qué hay? ¿soportales? ¿zaguanes?

RUF. Tiendas.

ADE. Ya, como todavía no he visto la heróica villa ....

RUF. Llegada de anoche, ¿como? Yo me ofrezco á mostrar á usted todo lo notable de la capital.

ADE. Mil gracias. Pero no continue usted así; tenga usted la bondad de dar la vuelta y pasar adelante,[67] aunque el tio habrá salido, hablará usted con su servidora.

RUF. Señora mia.

ADE. Ello, para entrar aquí habrá usted de pasar por donde está Adelita.

RUF. ¡Oh! pues ya le digo á usted que no trato de incomodarla. Yo solo me he apresurado á venir por saber si habia llegado con salud.

ADE. Sin novedad.[68] Cansadilla .... como yo.

RUF. Es inevitable. ¿Y qué tal el viaje?

ADE. Bueno. Solo hemos volcado una vez.

RUF. Entónces ha sido felicísimo.

ADE. Para lo que se acostumbra ....

RUF. Supongo[69] que no habrán ocurrido desgracias.

ADE. Please tell me; and below the upper floors, what have they? Porticos? Halls?

RUF. Stores.

ADE. Indeed, as yet I have not seen this heroic city . . . .

RUF. Having arrived last night, how could you have seen it? I offer to show you all that is notable in the capital.

ADE. Thank you. But do not continue so; be so kind as come in, although the uncle has gone out, you may speak with your servant.

RUF. My lady.

ADE. In order to enter here you will have to pass through where Adela is.

RUF. Oh! then I tell you that I do not wish to trouble her. I only hurried to come in order to know if she had arrived in good health.

ADE. Very well. A little tired, like myself.

RUF. That is inevitable. And what kind of a journey had you?

ADE. Good. We were upset only once.

RUF. Then you were most fortunate.

ADE. Taking into consideration what usually happens . . . .

RUF. I suppose that no accidents have happened.

ADE. No, señor, unos coscorrones y nada más.

RUF. Del mal el ménos. El susto sí seria grande.

ADE. Adela fué quien se asustó ménos.

RUF ¿Tiene espíritu,[70] eh?

ADE. Está hecha ya á esos lances. En un vuelco de coche fué donde le sucedió la avería que usted sabrá.... Porque supongo que usted será persona que le toque muy de cerca.

RUF. Figúrese usted: cuando soy el primero que la visita....

ADE. ¿Es usted....?—No será usted su primo, porque don Rufino la hubiera venido á ver anoche.

RUF. Estuvo sumamente ocupado. (*Ap.*) No me soltó la otra.[71]

ADE. De modo que usted viene á disculparle. Usted será un amigo suyo.

RUF. Intimo, inseparable.

ADE. Como yo de Adela. Me lo he pensado desde que le ví á usted.

RUF. Sentiria mucho que estuviese resentida con su primo.

ADE. Pues algo hay de eso.[72] Ha recibido ciertos informes que no favorecen gran cosa á ese galan.

ADE. No, sir: some bruises and nothing more.

RUF. Of evils, the least. The fright might have been great.

ADE. It was Adela who was frightened least.

RUF. Has she mettle, eh?

ADE. She is accustomed to those accidents. It was in the overturning of a coach that she suffered the injury that you may know of . . . Because, I suppose that you must be a person who takes great interest in her.

RUF. Being the first person who visits her, you can imagine , . . .

ADE. Are you . . . .? You cannot be her cousin, because Don Rufino should have come to see her last night.

RUF. He was very busily engaged. (*Aside.*) The other would not let me go.

ADE. So that you come to excuse him. You must be his friend.

RUF. Intimate, inseparable.

ADE. As I of Adela; I thought so from the moment I saw you.

RUF. I would grieve much if she were angry with her cousin.

ADE. Well, there is something in that. She has received some information that does not greatly favor this gentleman.

RUF. ¿En averiguaciones anda [73] la señorita?

ADE. Si eso le ofende al primo, cóbrese en la misma moneda: averigüele los pecados á la primita.

RUF. Pues supóngase usted que don Rufino me ha dado á mí esa comision.

ADE. Va por supuesto.

RUF. ¿Tendria usted la imparcialidad suficiente para informar de su amiga sin adular ni deprimir?

ADE. Me parece que este diálogo, entablado con una persona á quien veo por primera vez, es una señal de franqueza.

RUF. Como la pregunta que voy á hacer á usted lo es de la confianza que usted me inspira.

ADE. De la cual yo me felicito. Pregunte usted.

RUF. Adelita ¿viene dispuesta á casarse con su primo?

ADE. No venia mucho: pero va mudando de parecer.

RUF. ¿A pesar de los consabidos informes?

ADE. El último informante aboga por don Rufino.

RUF. Y Adela.... Usted se reirá de la pregunta, su puesto que [74] voy á verla al instante, [75] pero la curiosidad....

RUF. Is the lady going into investigations?

ADE. If that offends the cousin, let him repay her in the same coin; let him investigate the sins of his little cousin.

RUF. Suppose, then, that Don Rufino has given me a commission.

ADE. That is admitted, of course.

RUF. Could you have sufficient impartiality to give information of your friend, without flattery, or detraction?

ADE. It appears to me that this dialogue, entered into with a person whom I see for the first time, is a sign of frankness.

RUF. Just as the question which I am going to ask you is a sign of the confidence which you inspire in me.

ADE. I congratulate myself because of it. Question, then.

RUF. Does Adela come disposed to marry her cousin?

ADE. She came not much inclined, but she is changing her opinion.

RUF. In spite of the above-mentioned information?

ADE. The latest informant pleads for Don Rufino.

RUF. And Adela .... You will laugh at the question, since I am going to see her right away, but curiosity ....

ADE. Adelante con la curiosidad.

RUF. ¿Qué tal parecer,[76] qué tal vista tiene? ¿Es cosa que repugne . . . . ?

ADE. Lo que es de cara . . . .

RUF. Por ella pregunto.

ADE. Pues crea usted que no trocará Adela de figura[77] conmigo.

RUF. Señorita, eso es burlarse. Esas facciones, esos ojos . . . .

ADE. No son mejores que los de Adela, no.

RUF. Es que yo no tengo por buenos[78] sino á los que sobre ser como esos, miran . . . . como usted.

ADE. Los de Adela reunen ambas cualidades.

RUF. Pero ¿no es bizca?

ADE. Ya no.

RUF. ¿Como? ¿Le han hecho la nueva operacion?

ADE. Felicísimamente: si dentro de poco no habrá un bizco por un ojo de la cara.[79]

RUF. ¡Y dirán que no progresan las ciencias! ¡Oh! pues teniendo la prima la presencia de usted, no hay en que reparar.

ADE. ¡Hola! ¿usted perdona cualquier defectillo corporal en favor de un rostro agradable?

ADE. Go on—with curiosity—

RUF. How does she look? What is her appearance? Is it such as to be repulsive . . . . ?

ADE. As to her face . . . .

RUF. That is what I ask.

ADE. You may feel sure that Adela will not exchange her person for mine.

RUF. Lady, this is mockery. Those features, those eyes . . . .

ADE. Are not better than Adela's, no.

RUF. The fact is that I consider as good, only those, which besides being like yours, look . . . . as yours do.

ADE. Those of Adela's unite both qualities.

RUF. But is she not cross-eyed?

ADE. Not now.

RUF. How? Has the new operation been performed on her?

ADE. Most successfully; within a short time there will not be a cross-eyed person, at any price.

RUF. And some will say that the sciences do not progress! Oh, then my cousin having your presence, there is nothing more to object to.

ADE. Is it so! You pardon every minute bodily defect in favor of an agreeable countenance?

RUF. ¿Qué duda tiene? Los ojos son el espejo del alma. Pero esa visita . . . .

ADE. (*Mirando hácia adentro.*) Se está acabando. ¡Ay! Adela se dispone á salir.

RUF. Qué diantre! y yo que deseaba verla . . . . Usted no extrañará este deseo . . . .

ADE. Antes [80] lo estimo.

RUF. Detenerla cuando va á salir fuera impolítico; pero . . . .

ADE. Le diré que cruce por el patio, y usted puede salirle al encuentro y hablarla.

RUF. Sí, y acompañarla. Un millon de gracias por tanta bondad.

ADE. No hay por que.[81] Cuidado, no se asuste usted al ver á la prima.

RUF. Si es como usted, no hay miedo.

ADE. Pues por lo mismo.[82] Abur.[83] (*Cierra las persianas y vase.*)

RUF. A los piés de usted, señorita.

ESCENA IX.

DON RUFINO.

¿Asustarme? Si Adelita vale lo que su compañera de viaje, es una perla, una joya. Buenos y rebuenos [84] son los patacones de doña

RUF. Who can doubt that? The eyes are the mirror of the soul. But this visit . . . .

ADE. (*Looking within.*) She is just finishing. Yes, Adela is preparing herself to go out.

RUF. How unfortunate! and I who desire to see her . . . . You will not be surprised at this desire . . . .

ADE. I esteem it rather!

RUF. To detain her when she is going out, would be impolite; but . . . .

ADE. I will tell her to pass through the court, and you may go to meet her, and speak with her.

RUF. Yes, and to accompany her. A million of thanks for so much kindness.

ADE. There is no occasion for that. Take care that you are not frightened at seeing your cousin.

RUF. If she is like you, there is no fear.

ADE. Then, good day. (*She closes the Venitian blinds and goes out.*)

RUF. At your feet, Lady.

SCENE IX.

DON RUFINO.

RUF. To frighten me? If Adela is like her traveling companion she is a pearl, a jewel. Good and doubly good are the hard dollars of

Gertrúdis; pero una mujer amable, aunque sea propia, tiene su valor. ¡Cáspita, y qué salada es la gaditanita!

ESCENA X.

DON FABIAN, y luego GREGORIA y TOMASA; DON RUFINO.

FAB. (*Saliendo por la izquierda.*) Tampoco está por aquí la muchacha, y tengo que salir. Vamos hoy toca desayunarse despues de siesta.

TOM. (*Saliendo por la derecha.*) Ea, ya despaché. ¡Huy, don Fabian! ya no me acordaba de usted. Suba usted á su cuarto, que allá voy corriendo con el chocolate.

FAB. Corriendo no: vaya usted despacio, no se le vierta.[85] (*Aparte.*) Si no hubiera aquí gente, le decia mil tempestades.[86]

TOM. Pero usted ¿no viene?

FAB. Déme usted desde arriba una voz (*Vase Tomasa.*)

GREG. (*Saliendo.*) Señor don Rufino, he dicho á doña Adelita prodigios de usted, y está tan contenta.

RUF. ¿No va á salir?

GREG. La mantilla se estaba poniendo.

RUF. Cuando salga, anúncieme usted á ella con cualquier pretexto.

Miss Gertrude: but an amiable woman, although she is one's own wife, has her worth. By Jove, and how facetious is the young lady of Cadiz!

SCENE X.

DON FABIAN, and then GREGORIA and TOMASA; DON RUFINO.

FAB. (*Entering by the left.*) The girl is not yet here, and I must go out. Well, to-day I am obliged to breakfast after my nap.

TOM. (*Entering by the right.*) Indeed, I am through! Hello, Don Fabian! I had indeed forgotten you. Go up to your room, and I will run in haste with the chocolate.

FAB. In haste, no, go slowly, that you may not spill it. (*Aside.*) Were these people not present, I would blow a storm to her.

TOM. But, are you not coming?

FAB. Hail me from up-stairs. (*Tomasa goes out.*)

GREG. Don Rufino, I have said wonders to Adela about you, and she is very much pleased.

RUF. Is she not going out?

GREG. She was placing her mantilla on.

RUF. When she comes out, present me to her on any pretext.

ESCENA XI.

ADELA, con mantilla,[87] echado el velo, apoyada en una muleta y cojeando; un Criado, detras; Dichos.

ADE. (*Al criado.*) Sí, Pedro, vaya usted delante, y pregunte eso al ama. (*Vase el criado.*)

GREG. (*A don Rufino.*) Aquí está ya; mírela usted.

RUF. ¡Jesucristo!

FAB. ¡Una coja!

GREG. El señor es el primo de usted, señorita.

ADE. ¡Mi primo!

RUF. ¡Mi prima!

ADE. ¡Querido primo! ¡Como me ha engañado usted! (*Quítase el velo.*)

RUF. ¡La de la ventana!—El engañado he sido yo.

ADE. No tal: soy coja, pero no soy bizca.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) ¡Buena compensacion! Yo ignoraba....

ADE. (*Aparte.*) ¡Qué gesto[88] ha hecho! (*Alto.*) A una volcadura de un coche debo este flaco servico.[89] Yo le suponia á usted mas enterado de mi filiacion.

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Tiene gracia la cojita.[90]

SCENE XI.

ADELA, with mantilla, a veil thrown over her, leaning on a crutch, and limping; a male servant behind; others remain.

ADE. (*To the servant.*) Yes, Peter; go and ask the landlady. (*The servant goes out.*)

GREG. (*To Don Rufino.*) Here she is now; behold her!

RUF. For heaven sake!

FAB. A lame lady!

GREG. The gentleman is your cousin, Miss.

ADE. My cousin!

RUF. My cousin!

ADE. Dear cousin, how you have deceived me! (*Throwing aside the veil.*)

RUF. The one at the window! It is I, that have been deceived.

ADE. No, indeed; I am lame, but I am not cross-eyed.

RUF. (*Aside.*) Good exchange! (*Aloud.*) I was ignorant . . . .

ADE. (*Aside.*) What a grimace he made! (*Aloud.*) To the overturning of a coach, I owe this bad limb. I supposed you were better informed of my personal appearance.

FAB. (*Aside.*) Is she not cunning!

RUF. Pues no, y por eso. . . . (*Aparte.*) Yo no me caso con una inválida.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) ¡Ni una expresion de cortesía siquiera! En fin, ya nos hemos visto.

RUF. El reconocimiento ha sido un poco glacial, pero. . . .

ADE. Calmada la primera sorpresa, obra la sangre, digo la afinidad.[91]

RUF. Cierto, y fuera de este sitio. . . .

ADE. Aun aquí, mi primo no me rehusará un abrazo.

RUF. ¿Cómo era posible? (*Al tender Adela los brazos á su primo, cáesele la muleta y dale en un pié á don Rufino, que se aparta haciendo ademanes de dolor, mientras que Adela se apoya en Gregoria: la muleta permanece en el suelo.*)

RUF. ¡Ay!

ADE. ¡Ay que le ha caido á usted la muleta encima!

RUF. Sí, sobre la punta del pié. ¡Ay!

ADE. Cuánto lo siento.[92]

RUF. Yo tambien.

GREG. (*A don Fabian.*) Alce [93] usted esa muleta, hombre de Dios.

FAB. (*Alzándola.*) No me atreví . . . .

ADE. Es mi estrella fatal, primo.

RUF. Dígalo mi pié.

RUF. Well, no, and therefore. . . . (*Aside.*) I will not marry a cripple.

ADE. (*Aside.*) Not even a word of courtesy! (*Aloud.*) At last, we have seen each other.

RUF. The recognition has been a little cold, but . . . .

ADE. The first surprise being over, blood, I mean relationship, will work.

RUF. Certainly, and away from this place . . . .

ADE. Even here, my cousin will not refuse me an embrace.

RUF. How could it be possible? (*Adela, in extending her arms to her cousin, lets the crutch fall, and it strikes Don Rufino's foot, who retires making gestures of pain, while Adela leans on Gregoria: the crutch remains on the ground.*)

RUF. Oh!

ADE. Alas, the crutch has fallen on you!

RUF. Yes, upon the point of my foot. Oh!

ADE. How deeply do I feel it!

RUF. I, also.

GREG. (*To Don Fabian.*) Pick up that crutch, sir.

FAB. (*Raising it up.*) I did not dare . . . .

ADE. My star is very unlucky, cousin.

RUF. My foot can show it.

ADE. Iba á salir; usted hubiera podido acompañarme....

RUF. (*Aparte.*) ¡Y que Gertrúdis lo supiese![94]

ADE. Y por esta maldita casualidad.... Reniego[95] de mi muleta.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) Amén.

ADE. (*Aparte.* ¡Ya no se me ofrece!) ¿Le incomoda á usted mucho el golpe? ¿No puede usted andar, primo?

RUF. ¡Ay prima! (*Ap.* Ponderémoslo, para no acompañarla.) Mire usted como ando. (*Cojea.*)

ADE. Anda usted como yo.

FAB. (*Ofreciendo la muleta.*) Señorita....

RUF. (*Aparte.*) Herencia, y no boda; es preciso hacer que me aborrezca.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) Salió lo que yo pensaba; ya no me puede sufrir.[96]

RUF. Unos paños de agua y vinagre, creo que me harian al caso.

ADE. ¡Válgame Dios! ¡Que daño le he hecho á usted, primo! (*Aparte.*) Apuesto[97] á que lo finge por no salir.

RUF. ¡Es tanta mi sensibilidad de piés...!

FAB. Señorita....

ADE. Asista usted á mi primo, Gregoria. Volvámonos adentro.

ADE. I was about going out; you could have accompanied me . . . .

RUF. (*Aside.*) If Gertrude should know this!

ADE. And through this confounded accident . . . . I curse my crutch.

RUF. (*Aside.*) Amen.

ADE. (*Aside.*) And he does not offer himself to me! (*Aloud.*) Does the blow hurt you much? Are you not able to walk, cousin?

RUF. Alas, cousin! (*Aside.*) I must exaggerate, in order not to accompany her. (*Aloud.*) See how I walk. (*He limps.*)

ADE. You walk just like me.

FAB. (*Offering the crutch.*) Miss . . . .

RUF. (*Aside.*) Inheritance and no marriage; it is necessary to make her hate me.

ADE. (*Aside.*) It turned out as I imagined. Now, he cannot bear me.

RUF. Cloths, with water and vinegar, I believe will be suitable in this case.

ADE. Bless me! What an injury I have done you, cousin! (*Aside.*) I bet he is feigning in order not to go out.

RUF. The sensitiveness of my foot is very great.

FAB. Miss.

ADE. Assist my cousin, Gregoria. Let me return within.

RUF. ¡Oh! no deje usted sus diligencias por mí.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) ¿Cómo le daria yo en ojos . . . . ?[98]

FAB. Tenga usted la bondad de . . . (*Dándole la muleta.*)

ADE. Gracias, Usted es quien tuvo anoche la atencion . . . .

FAB. Sí, señora, el del lío.

RUF. ¡Ay!

ADE. El criado no sabe las calles, y mi primo no me puede acómpañar; ¿gustaría usted ofrecerme su brazo?

FAB. ¿Yo? Sí, señora . . . . ¡toma . . . . ! vaya . . . . ! Si don Rufino lo permite . . . .

RUF. ¿Por qué no? ¡Ay!

ADE. (*A don Fabian, que se equivoca de brazo.*) Ese es el brazo de la muleta.

FAB. Perdone usted. (*Aparte*) He de estar colorado como un pimiento.[99]

TOM. (*Desde una ventana junto al tejado.*) don Fabian, aquí tiene usted ya el chocolate.

FAB. (*Aparte.* ¡Maldita sea tu boca!) Hoy almuerzo fuera.

ADE. Sí, conmigo.

FAB. (*Aparte.*) ¡Ay Jesus! ¡y no llevo mas que medio duro!

ADE. Primito, á Dios.

RUF. Abur.

RUF. Oh! do not leave your errands on my account.

ADE. (*Aside.*) How could I get even with him? . . . .

FAB. Be so kind as . . . . (*Giving her the crutch*)

ADE. Thanks. You are he who rendered the service last night.

FAB. Yes, madam, he of the parcel.

RUF. Dear me!

ADE. The servant does not know the street, and my cousin is not able to accompany me; would you please offer me your arm?

FAB. I? Yes, Miss . . . . Indeed . . . . ! Willingly . . . . ! If Don Rufino permits it . . . .

RUF. Why not? Oh, dear!

ADE. (*To Don Fabian who mistakes the arm.*) This is the arm of the crutch.

FAB. Pardon. (*Aside.*) I must be blushing like a pepper-pod.

TOM. (*From a window next to the roof.*) Don Fabian, here is your chocolate.

FAB. (*Aside.*) Cursed be your mouth. (*Aloud.*) To-day, I breakfast out.

ADE. Yes, with me.

FAB. (*Aside.*) O, heaven! And I have but a half dollar with me.

ADE. Dear cousin, good-bye.

RUF. Good day.

ADE. Aliviarse.

RUF. Divertirse.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) No será Rufino mi esposo.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) A mi vieja me vuelvo.[100]

FAB. (*Aparte*). De hambre y de cortedad no veo la tierra que piso.

ADE. Por aquí, don Fabian.

RUF. Por allí, Gregoria.

(*Adela cojeando, apoyada en don Fabian, se va por un lado, y por el otro don Rufino, cojeando tambien, y apoyado en Gregoria.*)

ACTO SEGUNDO.

Sala de la habitacion de Adela. Puerta principal en el fondo y una de un gabinete á un lado. Un sofá y cerca de él un velador.[1]

ESCENA PRIMERA.

DON RUFINO y DON SILVESTRE, que aparecen sentados.

SILV. (*Levantándose.*) No, no es razon que espere usted mas. (*Yendo hácia la puerta del fondo.*) ¡Perico, Gregoria!—¡Se han vuelto sordos!—Permítame usted que vea si están ahí, y que envie á uno de los dos á ver si viene esa chica.

ADE. Get better.

RUF. Enjoy yourself.

ADE. (*Aside.*) Rufino will not be my husband.

RUF. (*Aside.*) I go back to my old woman.

FAB. (*Aside.*) I am so hungry and bashful that I do not see the earth I tread upon.

ADE. This way, Don Fabian.

RUF. That way, Gregoria.

(*Adela limping, leaning on Don Fabian, goes out on one side; and on the other, Don Rufino, also limping, and leaning on Gregoria.*)

ACT SECOND.

Parlor in ADELA'S apartments. Principal door in the back, and one to a room at the side. A sofa, and near it a small table.

SCENE FIRST.

DON RUFINO and DON SILVESTRE, who appear seated.

SILV. (*Rising.*) No, it is not right that you should wait longer. (*Going to the rear door.*) Perico, Gregoria! They have all become deaf! Let me see if they are here, that I may send one of the two to see if this girl is coming.

RUF. Déjelos usted, que ya mi prima no tardará.

SILV. No le hace, no le hace.[2]—¡Perico! (*Vase*)

ESCENA II.

DON RUFINO.

A este buen hombre ya le he calado: es un imbécil que puede servirme de mucho. El diantre de la cojitranca me sedujo al pronto; pero despues....¡Guarda, Pablo! Y el tio que me afirma que es incurable.... Lo que ántes dije: [3]herencia, y no boda. El papel que debo hacer con mi prima está reducido á dos puntos; jurar que estoy pronto á casarme con ella, y al mismo tiempo disgustarla de modo que no se atreva á cogerme la palabra. Es preciso improvisarle un novio inmediatamente. Don Fabian es el único para el caso. Sí, es preciso hacer que don Fabian quiera [4] a mi prima y mi prima a él, y comprometerlos á los dos á casarse: con esto la herencia se me viene rodada.

ESCENA III.

DON SILVESTRE. DON RUFINO.

SILV. Ya le han dado al muchacho las señas y ha salido á buscar á mi sobrinita dichosa.

RUF. ¿Qué necesidad habia de eso?

RUF. Leave them alone, as my cousin will not delay long.

SILV. No matter, no matter.—Perico! (*He goes out.*)

SCENE II.

DON RUFINO.

RUF. I have already gauged this poor fellow. He is a fool who may be very useful to me. That devil of a limping girl seduced me at first; but afterwards .... Take care! And the uncle assures me that it is incurable .... That which I said before: "inheritance and no marriage." The part which I must act with my cousin is reduced to two points, to swear that I am ready to be married to her; and, at the same time, disgust her in such a way that she dare not hold me to my word. It is necessary to improvise a lover immediately and Don Fabian is the only one for the case. Yes, I must force Don Fabian to love my cousin, and she him, and oblige them to marry. With this, the inheritance comes rolling to me.

SCENE III.

DON SILVESTRE, DON RUFINO.

SILV. The boy has got the address, and he has gone to find my troublesome little niece.

RUF. What was the necessity of that?

SILV. Hace dos horas que está usted aquí esperándola.

RUF. ¿Y qué? mientras tanto usted y yo hemos hecho conocimiento.

SILV. ¡Cuidado que ha sido imprudencia de criatura[5] hacer que el criado se vuelva á casa, y dejarse acompañar de un extraño!

RUF. Y rogarle, que es más.

SILV. ¿Con que ella le rogó que le diese el brazo?

RUF. Y don Fabian, á pesar de su timidez, no se hizo de pencas.

SILV. Ahora que hablamos de ese indíviduo, ¿qué casta de pájaro es?

RUF. Es un literato de buhardilla con quien tropecé hará cosa de un año,[6] por ser yo entónces editor responsable de un periódico, para el cual encargaban de cuando en cuando[7] á ese mozo algun articulillo de municion.

SILV. Ya, en la redaccion se verian ustedes.

RUF. No, señor, los editores responsables no parecen por las redacciones. Como nada tienen que hacer allí . . . .

SILV. ¿No ven lo que firman?

RUF. Si su obligacion es firman sin ver. Al editor se le envian en blanco unos pliegos de papel de imprimir, él echa en ellos su gara-

SILV. You have now been here two hours, waiting for her.

RUF. And what of that? In the mean time you and I have made each other's acquaintance.

SILV. Really it was an imprudence of the girl to send the servant back home, and to permit a stranger to accompany her.

RUF. And what is more, to pray him to do so.

SILV. Then she begged him to give her his arm?

RUF. And Don Fabian, in spite of his timidity, did not hesitate to consent.

SILV. Now that we are speaking of that person, what kind of a bird is he?

RUF. He is a garret scribbler against whom I stumbled about a year ago, because I was then responsible editor of a newspaper, for which we ordered, from time to time, from this fellow, some little article to fill out the paper.

SILV. Indeed, you would meet in the editorial office. . . .

RUF. No, sir; the responsible editors do not appear in the editorial office, as they have nothing to do there . . . .

SILV. Do they not see what they sign?

RUF. Their obligation is only to sign without seeing. Some sheets of printing paper are sent in blank to the editor; he puts on them his

bato, y el redactor los llena con lo que mejor le parece. Este fué el motivo de conocernos Fabian y yo. Me llevó á casa un par de artículos para que viera si queria autorizarlos con mi firma, y yo conociendo en este paso su ignorancia completa de las costumbres periodísticas, le hice preguntas, le dí consejos, y desde aquí datan nuestras relaciones, que se reducen á habernos hablado media docena de veces para algunos asuntillos de imprenta.

SILV. ¿Creerá usted, señor don Rufino, que ese jóven no me da buena espina? [8]

RUF. El es un tonto, y eso tiene adelantado para hombre de bien.[9]

SILV. Esta mañana cuando le pregunté como se llamaba, casi no acertó á responderme. ¿Que hombre de bien teme decir su nombre?

RUF. Pues hoy es cuando le he visto mas intrépido que nunca. Bien que [10] la curiosídad de conocer á la nueva huespeda. . . . Anoche, creo que se hizo encontradizo con ustedes.

SILV. Anoche nos le encontrámos en el portal, esta mañana me le encontré en el patio, despues ha vuelto, y se ha encontrado con Adela; de modo que á pesar de la cortedad del angelito, viendo estoy que un dia me le voy á encontrar en la sopa.[11]

pot-hook, and the publisher fills them with what he deems best. This was the cause of Fabian and myself becoming acquainted. He brought to my house a couple of articles in order that I should see if I would authorize them with my name; and I, knowing from this circumstance, his complete ignorance of the customs of periodical papers asked him some questions, gave him advice, and from this sprang our relations, which may be reduced to our having spoken together a half dozen times about some little matters of printing.

SILV. Believe me, Don Rufino, that this young man does not impress me well.

RUF. He is a fool, that is the step he has made toward being an honest man.

SILV. This morning when I asked him his name he almost refused to answer me. What honest man is afraid to tell his name?

RUF. Well, to-day I have seen him bolder than ever; all through curiosity of becoming acquainted with the new lady guest . . . . Last night I believe that he managed to throw himself in your way.

SILV. Last night we met at the portal, this morning I met him in the court, after I had gone for a walk he met Adela; so that, in spite of the bashfulness of the little angel, I see that some day I am going to meet him in my soup.

RUF. (*Aparte.* Aquí de mi plan.) Señor don Silvestre, su penetractíon de usted confirma mis recelos. Yo tambien he sospechado que don Fabian se inclina á mi prima.

SILV. Perdone usted, yo no habia penetrado tanto.

RUF. No vale disimular, usted no es lerdo y los indicios saltan á los ojos. Fabian se halla en un estado infeliz, ha supuesto rica á mi prima, la ha visto coja, la ha creido más fácil de alcanzar, y hasta ahora no lleva mal camino.

SILV. Pues en usted consiste el echarle á un lado. ¿Está usted en ánimo de casarse con Adela?

RUF. Si ella me quiere, al punto.

SILV. ¿A pesar de su cojera?

RUF. Ya sabe usted el refran; la buena casada la pierna quebrada.

SILV. Cesará usted de visitar á esa otra señora mayor.

RUF. ¿A doña Gertrudis? Si le he dicho á usted que solo mantenia con ella relaciones de intereses.[12]

SILV. Entónces usted será mi sobrino. Trate de hacerse querer de Adelita, y cuente con mi auxílio.

RUF. Lo acepto con entusiasmo. Oiga usted lo que debemos hacer.

SILV. Disponga usted de mí.

RUF. (*Aside.*) Now to my plan. (*Aloud.*) Don Silvestre, your penetration confirms my suspicions. I also have suspected that Don Fabian was inclined to my cousin.

SILV. Pardon, I had not penetrated so far.

RUF. There is no need to dissemble, you are not dull, and the indications are plain before your eyes. Fabian is in a miserable position, he has supposed my cousin rich, and has seen her lame; therefore, he has believed it more easy to catch her, and up to the present time he has not taken a bad route.

SILV. Well, now it is in your hands to put him aside. Is it your intention to marry Adela?

RUF. If she loves me, at once.

SILV. In spite of her lameness?

RUF. You know the proverb; a good housewife must have a broken leg.

SILV. Will you then cease visiting this old lady?

RUF. Miss Gertrude? I have already told you that I only entertained business relations with her.

SILV. Then you will be my nephew. You are going to try to make Adela love you, and you may rely upon my aid.

RUF. I accept with enthusiasm. Hear, then, what we must do.

SILV. Dispose of me.

RUF. Adelita, quizá no venia muy dispuesta á prendarse de mi persona.

SILV. Cierto, y los informes que de usted nos han dado no la han dispuesto[13] mas favorablemente.

RUF. Yo sospecho que se ha picado porque no he salido con ella.

SILV. Hizo usted un disparate de los que una niña tarde perdona.

RUF. Adela, por lo mismo que no me quiere, debe estar muy propensa á dejarse querer de otro.

SILV. Sin embargo, como tiene que decidir de hoy á mañana . . . .[14]

RUF. El ser simple tal vez es un mérito para con las mujeres.

SILV. Para con algunas no diré que no.

RUF. Por eso[15] lo primero que debemos hacer es combatir la propension que Adela pueda tener á inclinarse á Fabian.

SILV. Yo le diré que cometeria un absurdo si se encaprichára por ese títere.

RUF. No, lo que debe usted hacer es dar por supuesto que se ha encaprichado.

SILV. ¡Hombre !

RUF. Y reconvenirla por ello; esto da mas pié.

SILV. Verdaderamente.

RUF. Adela, perhaps, did not come very well disposed to fall in love with me.

SILV. True, and the information that we received about you has not disposed her more favorably.

RUF. I imagine that she was offended because I did not go out with her.

SILV. You made nonsense of those things that a girl seldom pardons.

RUF. Because Adela does not love me, she ought to be very well disposed to let another make love to her.

SILV. Notwithstanding, as she must decide to-day or to-morrow . . . .

RUF. It is perhaps a virtue with women to be simpletons.

SILV. With some, I will not say, no.

RUF. Therefore the first that we ought do is to combat the propensity Adela may have to fall in love with Fabian.

SILV. I will say to her that she would commit an absurdity, if she should take a fancy to that puppet.

RUF. No, what you must do is to take it for granted that she has taken a fancy already.

SILV. Man!

RUF. And to remonstrate with her for that; this gives more facilities.

SILV. Really . . . .

RUF. Y si ella niega que él piense en ella, sostenerlo de firme, hasta que acosada, aturdida, aburrida, se le haga saltar y tome una resolucion . . . . favorable á mí.

SILV. Usted me seduce con su elocuencia, me aturde tambien,[16] y me inspira su propio entusiasmo. Sí, señor, yo predicaré, yo machacaré, yo desesperaré á mi sobrina, para que usted sea mi sobrino. De un modo ú otro, usted heredará al tio de Indias.

RUF. Ese es mi único objeto.

ESCENA IV.

ADELA, DON FABIAN, Dichos.

ADE. Ya estamos de vuelta.[17]

SILV. Ya era hora.

RUF. Bien venidos, señores.[18]

FAB. (*Queriendo retirarse.*) Con permiso . . . .

ADE. ¿Se pasò ya el dolor?

RUF. Cuando la he visto á usted, ha cesado.

ADE. Bueno es que de la que hizo el daño salga el remedio.

FAB. Sí ustedes permiten . . . .

ADE. Ustedes me consentirán que vaya á quitarme esta ropa.

RUF. And if she denies that he thinks anything of her, maintain it firmly; until harassed, thoughtless, wearied, she may become wild and take a resolution .... favorable to me.

SILV. You seduce me with your eloquence; and you also make me giddy, and inspire me with your own enthusiasm. Yes, sir, I will preach, hammer, drive my niece to despair in order that you may be my nephew. By one method or another, you will inherit from the uncle of the Indias.

RUF. That is my only object.

SCENE IV.

ADELA, DON FABIAN, and aforesaid persons.

ADE. Now we are back.

SILV. Now, it is time.

RUF. Welcome, my friends.

FAB. (*Wishing to retire.*) With your permission ....

ADE. Has the pain already ceased?

RUF. It ceased as soon as I saw you.

ADE. It is proper that the remedy came from the same person who did the harm.

FAB. If you will allow me ....

ADE. You will permit me to change my dress.

SILV. De camino que vas á tu cuarto, te diré en el gabinete cuatro[19] palabras.

FAB. (*Despidiéndose.*) Señorita . . . .

ADE. Adios, don Fabian; no se olvide usted de mi encarguito.

FAB. ¡Oh! pierda usted cuidado.

SILV. (*Yéndose con Adela.*) ¡Encarguillos tenemos! (*Vanse los dos.*)

ESCENA V.

DON FABIAN, DON RUFINO.

RUF. Amigo don Fabian, no dirá usted que no le favorecen las damas.

FAB. Hasta ahora no tengo mucho que agradecerles.

RUF. Ambiciosillo es usted. ¿Le parece poco acompañar á una niña y almorzar con ella? Porque supongo que usted no estará todavía en disposicion de decir misa.[20]

FAB. Poco mènos. Pero ¡de qué susto he salido! Cuando estuvimos en la calle, Adela mandó retirar al criado y me dijo que primero iriamos á casa de un señor antiguo, camarada que fué del padre de ella. Harto me asustan á mí las visitas; pero ¡qué trasudores me daban cuando pasábamos por delante de una fonda!

SILV. I will say a few words to you in the reception-room as you are going to your apartment.

FAB. (*Taking leave.*) Miss . . . .

ADE. Adieu, Don Fabian; please do not forget my little commissions.

FAB. Oh! dismiss all care.

SILV. (*Going with Adela.*) We have already little commissions! (*They two go out.*)

SCENE V.

DON FABIAN, DON RUFINO.

RUF. Friend Don Fabian, you will not say that the ladies do not favor you.

FAB. Until now, I have little to thank them for.

RUF. You are somewhat ambitious. Do you regard it a small thing to accompany a young girl, and to breakfast with her? Because, I suppose, that you are not yet in a disposition to say mass.

FAB. Little less. But what fright have I escaped from! When we reached the street Adela ordered the servant away, and said to me, that we would go first to the house of an old gentleman, who was once a comrade of her father's. The visit frightened me enough; but what a sweat I was in when we were passing

Diez reales de vellon[21] era todo lo que llevaba en el bolsillo.

RUF. ¡Ah, ha, ha!

FAB. Yo rezaba á todos los santos del cielo para que me librasen de aquel apuro, yo iba tropezando con todos, consumido de angustia y sin atreverme á decir á la pobre coja: Esta boca es mia. Llegamos á la casa del señor consabido, que es un castellano viejo que vió construir la puerta de Alcalá, y vive aun á la usanza de su pueblo; apénas nos habiamos sentados, cuando ya habia prevenido al ama que sacase las once.[22] ¡En la vida podré yo pagar á aquel santo varon la merced que me ha hecho! Amigo, nos pusieron[23] una mesa con tantas viandas y tanto lujo, que apénas me atreví á probar un bocado.

RUF. A la vuelta ya tendría usted ménos cortedad con mi prima.

FAB. Sí, señor, animado por su bondad, y libre de tener que confesar el estado de mi bolsillo, pude responder á las preguntas que me hacia.

RUF. ¿Y qué encargo es ese que le ha hecho á usted?

FAB. Son dos; el té que le han servido esta mañana no le ha gustado, y desea que pregunte dónde lo hay bueno,[24] necesita además una

by a restaurant! Ten reals were all that I had in my purse.

RUF. Ha, ha, ha!

FAB. I prayed to all the saints in heaven to deliver me from that affliction. I went stumbling against everyone, consumed by anguish, and without daring to say to the poor lame girl: "This is my mouth." We arrived at the house of the said gentleman, who is an old Castillian, who saw the building of the gate of Alcalá, and still lives according to the custom of his village; hardly were we seated when he ordered the housekeeper to serve the lunch. Never in my life will I be able to pay that holy man the favor which he did me! My friend, they set a table for us of so much splendor, and loaded with so many dishes, that I hardly dared taste a mouthful.

RUF. In returning you would indeed have had less bashfulness with my cousin.

FAB. Yes, sir, encouraged by her goodness, free from having to confess the state of my purse, I could reply to the questions she asked me.

RUF. And what commission has she charged you with?

FAB. There are two; the tea served to her this morning did not please her, and she desires me to ask where there is good tea. More-

criada, y me ha pedido que avise en la agencia.

RUF. ¿Y qué clase de preguntas hacia?

FAB. Principalmente sobre los usos y costumbre de Madrid. Por ejemplo, me preguntó si pareceria mal salir por la noche al patio á tomar el fresco. Yo dije que no habia inconveniente.

RUF. Ya lo creo. ¿Y qué infiere usted de esa pregunta?

FAB. Que tendrá de noche calor en su cuarto.

RUF. ¿Y nada más deduce usted?

FAB. ¿Qué más?

RUF. Lo que está patente.

FAB. Soy un topo: [25] nada columbro.[26]

RUF. Don Fabian, hablemos claro. Mi prima le ha escogido á usted por su guia, su confidente, su agente. Por [27] modesto que usted sea, no me podrá negar que estas confianzas prueban una cosa.

FAB. ¿Cuál?

RUF. Que mi prima le tiene aficion á usted.

FAB. ¿Está usted en su juicio? ¡A mí!

RUF. A usted, á usted.

FAB. Credulidad se necesitaba para persuadírselo. ¡Una mujer que me ha visto anoche por primera vez!

over, she needs a servant, and has asked me to give notice at the agency.

RUF. And what kind of questions did she ask?

FAB. Principally of the customs and manners of Madrid. For example, she asked me if it would appear badly to go out at night to the court to take the fresh air. I said that it was not improper.

RUF. I believe so. And what do you infer from this question.

FAB. That she may feel warm at night in her room.

RUF. And you deduce nothing more?

FAB. What more?

RUF. That which is patent.

FAB. I am a mole. I descry nothing.

RUF. Don Fabian, let us speak plainly. My cousin has selected you for her guide, her confidant, her agent. However modest you may be, you will not be able to deny that these confidences prove one thing.

FAB. What?

RUF. That my cousin has an affection for you.

FAB. Are you in your senses? For me!

RUF. For you, for you.

FAB. A man must be credulous to be persuaded of that. A woman who saw me last night for the first time!

RUF. Por la impresion de la primera vez se suele amar.[28]

FAB. A una persona que posea cualidades aventajadas, pase; pero ¡á mí!

RUF. ¡Puede usted quejarse! ¿Es usted feo?

FAB. Hombre....

RUF. ¿Es usted tonto?

FAB. A lo ménos dicen que lo parezco.

RUF. Recomendacion para ser querido.

FAB. Y el ser pobre ¿es tambien recomendacion?

RUF. Es que Adela no es rica[29].

FAB. ¿No heredan usted y ella al indiano?

RUF. ¡Valiente friolera, [30] Sabe usted lo que le tocará á mi prima, segun mi cuenta? Unos seis mil reales anuales.

FAB. ¿Nada mas? Eso es lo que vengo yo á ganar con mis articulillos.

RUF. Y eso cuando se los pagan á usted. Casándose ustedes dos, juntaban doce mil, que ya dan para ir pasando medianamente. Porque eso sí, como usted se case con Adela, los seis mil del pico no hay quien se los quite. Y como usted ni es muy ambicioso, ni debe tampoco prometerse un gran porvenír....

FAB. ¿Qué me he de prometer,[31] si llevo ya mil desengaños de que no sirvo para ninguna

RUF. Love springs sometimes from the first impression!

FAB. This may happen to a person who possesses advantageous qualities—but, to me!

RUF. Have you any cause for complaint? Are you ugly?

FAB. Man . . . .

RUF. Are you a fool?

FAB. They say, at least, that I look like one.

RUF. A recommendation for being loved.

FAB. And being poor, is that also a recommendation?

RUF. But Adela is not rich.

FAB. Do you and she not inherit the wealth of the Indian uncle?

RUF. Paltry trifle! Do you know what will fall to my cousin according to my account? Some six thousand reals annually.

FAB. Nothing more? That is what I gain from my little articles.

RUF. And that when you are paid for them. You two being married unite twelve thousand, which give a moderate living. Because, undoubtedly, if you marry Adela no one can take away the six thousand of the balance. And, as you are neither very ambitious, nor ought ever promise yourself a great future . . . .

FAB. What can I promise myself when I bear a thousand disappointments that I am not

carrera? ¿A quién me presento yo, que no me tenga por un idiota? Que entro en una casa para el manejo de papeles, ó en una asociacion literaria, como los primeros dias ando aturdido y fuera de mí, cometo mil errores; y ántes que llegue á cobrar confianza y acreditarme, ya se han hartado de mí, ú otro mas resuelto me ha birlado la plaza.[32] No se hable de pretender, por que una vez que me propuse dar un memorial, aunque tuve ánimo para llegar á los ministerios, no me atreví á pasar de la porteria.

RUF. Pues ya ve usted, con ese carácter, difícil será que usted medre ni haga jamás una gran boda.

FAB. Y tan difícil como es.

RUF. Mi prima le convenia á usted. Usted que tan filósofo se muestra escribiendo, debia preferir en una esposa lo moral á lo físico.

FAB. Seguro que debe preferirse.

RUF. Y en realidad, para una mujer, el uso expedito de ambos piés es un puro lujo. Las cojas andan, las cojas corren; lo que no pueden hacer es bailar, pero una casada debe renunciar al baile.

FAB. Y las solteras que bailen como yo, tambien.

fit for any profession! To whom do I present myself that he does not take me for an idiot? If I enter a house for the administration of papers, or enter a literary association, during the first days I become confused and beside myself, and commit a thousand errors; and, before I can recover confidence in myself and gain credit, they are already tired of me, or another more bold has cut me out. Don't speak to me of pretending; because, once I determined to present a petition, and though I had the courage to go to the department, I did not dare pass by the porter's lodge.

RUF. Then, you see with that character, it will be difficult for you to thrive, nor may you ever have a great marriage.

FAB. Yes, it is indeed really difficult.

RUF. My cousin would suit you. You, who show yourself so much a philosopher when you write, ought to prefer in a wife the moral to the physical.

FAB. It is certain that it ought to be preferred.

RUF. And, in reality, for a woman, the free use of both feet is a matter of pure luxury. The lame walk, the lame run; that which they cannot do is to dance, but a married woman ought to renounce dancing.

FAB. And the unmarried ones also who dance as I do.

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RUF. Con que ánimo, don Fabian. Usted se debe casar con Adela.

FAB. Para casarse se necesita quererse.[33]

RUF. En mi opinion no es muy preciso.

FAB. En la mia sí. Y como yo no he pensado en tal cosa . . . .

RUF. ¡Oh! pues la muchacha lo merece. El tio dice que es la misma amabilidad y virtud.

FAB. Será un ángel; pero yo no la quiero.

RUF. Vamos, que es imposible que á usted le disguste.

FAB. Tampoco me disgusta; me es indiferente, pues al cabo es una mujer á quien hoy principio á tratar. Ahora, si mas adelante . . . . sobre todo, si ella me quisiera . . . .

RUF. Si ella le quisiera á usted, ¿la correspondería?

FAB. Siempre es lisonjero verse querido.

RUF. Pues usted lo es.

FAB. ¡Bah!

RUF. Prueba al canto.[34]

FAB. ¡Qué!

RUF. Irrecusable. Adela le ha dado á usted una cita.

FAB, ¿Cómo? ¿cuándo?

RUF. So then, courage, Don Fabian. You ought to marry Adela.

FAB. Love is necessary for marriage.

RUF. In my opinion, that is not very necessary.

FAB. In mine, it is. And, as I have not thought of such a thing . . . .

RUF. Oh? well, the girl deserves it. Her uncle says that she is amiability and virtue itself.

FAB. She may be an angel, but I do not love her.

RUF. It is impossible that she displease you.

FAB. Neither does she; she is indifferent to me, chiefly because she is a woman with whom I am to-day beginning to become acquainted. Now, if in the future . . . above all, should she love me . . . .

RUF. If she should love you, would you return it?

FAB. It is always flattering to see one's self loved.

RUF. Well, you are loved.

FAB. Pooh!

RUF. The proof is evident.

FAB. What!

RUF. Unimpeachable. Adela has given you a rendezvous.

FAB. How? When?

RUF. ¿Todavía no ha caido usted en ello, hombre de Dios?[35] ¿No le ha dicho Adela á usted que esta noche queria salir á tomar el fresco al jardin?

FAB. Sí tal, así que anocheciera.

RUF. Pues ahí tiene usted la cita con todas sus circunstancias; dia, sitio, y hora: ¿quiere usted más? ¿Cómo se dan las citas de amor al principio?

FAB. Como ésta para mí será la primera....

RUF. Ya se conoce. Pues, querido, si usted es hombro de honor y vergüenza,[36] no debe faltar.

FAB. Hombre de vergüenza sí soy: de muchísima. Pero ¿y si es todo una ilusion de usted?

RUF. El modo de desengañarse es acudir.

FAB. Eso verdad es. Acudiendo y mirando bien lo que hablo.... No propasándome á una declaracion....

RUF. ¡Ah! ¡quiere usted que ella sea la que se declare! Me parece que cuando da el primer paso, no se le caerá á usted la venera[37] si da el segundo.

FAB. Pero se me caerá el alma á los piés si me contesta con un réspice.

RUF. Ninguna jóven se enfada porque la requieran de amores. Y además ¿qué juicio formaria usted de una dama que á la primera

RUF. Yet you have not fallen on it, saintly man? Has not Adela said to you that she wished to go to the garden this evening to take the fresh air?

FAB. Yes, indeed, as soon as nightfall.

RUF. Well then, you have the rendezvous with all its circumstances; day, place and hour, do you want more? How are the rendezvous of love given at first?

FAB. As this will be to me the first . . . .

RUF. That can be seen. Well, dear sir, if you are an honorable and modest man you ought not to fail.

FAB. A modest man, yes I am, of exceeding modesty. And if it is all a delusion of yours?

RUF. The manner of setting yourself right is to repair there.

FAB. That is true. Attending and looking well to what I say. . . .Not committing myself by a proposal.

RUF. Ah! Do you wish her to propose to you? It appears to me that if she takes the first step, you will not fall from the height of your dignity if you take the second.

FAB. But my soul will fall to my feet if she answer with a rebuff.

RUF. No young lady gets offended because she is made love to. And, besides, what opinion would you have of a young lady who yields

insinuacion se rindiera?[38] Muéstrese usted muy fino y muy apasionado, y no le desdeñarán á usted, no.

FAB. ¿De dónde he de sacar yo una pasion que no siento?

RUF. Tanto mejor para ponderarla. Estudie usted su papel,[39] piense usted ántes lo que ha de decir.

FAB. ¡Oh! por pensarlo no quedará. Para cualquier asunto que tenga que tratar con una persona, me prevengo ántes en casa. Me siento, cavilo en silencio al principio, luego me enfrasco me levanto de la silla hablando solo, doy mil vueltas á la cuestion; y cuando llega el momento, y la tal persona me sale con un reparo que no se me ha ocurrido, me quedo hecho un pasmarote, encajo una necedad y ciento en seguida.

RUF. Afortunadamente en esta ocasion no puede usted errar. Si habla usted á Adela con desembarazo, su elocuencia de usted la persuadirá, si se muestra usted tímido, considerará ella la timidez como una señal de amor; y en ambos casos debe usted prometerse una respuesta favorable. Con que, ¿bajará usted al patio?

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Yo de buena gana le diria que no,[40] pero sí no me atrevo. Usted me ataja por todos lados. No estoy convencido,

at the first insinuation? You should show yourself very tender, and very passionate, and you will not be disdained.

FAB. How will I feign a passion I do not feel?

RUF. So much easier to exaggerate. Study your part, think over before what you ought to say.

FAB. Oh! Thinking will not be wanting. For, whatever matter I may have to transact with a person, I personally prepare myself at home. I sit, I cavil in silence at the beginning; then I become absorbed, and rise from my seat speaking aloud. I give a thousand turns to the question; and, when the moment arrives and the person in the case presents me an observation which had not occurred to me, I stop dumbfounded. I blurt out a stupid thud, and a hundred more afterward.

RUF. Fortunately on this occasion you cannot err. If you speak to Adela boldly, your eloquence will persuade her, if you show yourself timid, she will consider your timidity a sign of love; and, in both cases, you ought to assure yourself a favorable reply. So you will come down to the court?

FAB. (*Aside.*) I would rather tell him, no, but I do not dare. (*Aloud.*) You surround me on all sides. I am not convinced, but I do

pero no sé qué responder. En fin, una señorita coja será menos descontentadiza que otra que esté en mejor pié.

RUF. Es decir. . . .[41]

FAB. Es decir que acudiré á la dichosa cita . . . . que Dios sabe aun si es cita ó no.

RUF. Bien. Pues retírese usted á estudiar dulzuras para el coloquio.

FAB. No: ántes voy á desempeñar los encargos de Adela. (*Vase.*)

RUF. Al galan[42] involuntario ya le tengo medio convencido; falta ver[43] cómo se nos presenta la dama.

ESCENA VI.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

ADE. Perdone usted que me haya entretenido tanto.

RUF. He conversado con don Fabian, que por cierto me ha divertido mucho.

ADE. No ha sido tan divertida mi conversacion con el tio. Una repasata me ha echado . . . .

RUF. . Cosas[44] de señor mayor.

ADE. Cosas de señor que todo se lo cree. ¿Qué tonterías le ha dicho usted acerca de ese don Fabian, que me ha aturdido toda con ellas?

not know what to answer. In truth, a lame lady will be less fastidious than one who stands on a better footing.

RUF. That means. . . . . .

FAB. That means that I will attend the said rendezvous. . . .and God only knows whether it be a rendezvous or not.

RUF. Good. Then you should retire to study sweet things for the colloquy.

FAB. No. First, I am going to execute Adela's commissions. (*He goes out.*)

RUF. I have half convinced the involuntary lover; now, we shall see how the lady presents herself.

SCENE VI.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

ADE. Forgive me that I have been detained so long.

RUF. I have conversed with Don Fabian, who certainly has amused me a great deal.

ADE. My conversation with my uncle has not been so amusing. He has been lecturing me.

RUF. Whims of an old gentleman.

ADE. Whims of a gentleman who believes everything. What nonsense have you said to him about Don Fabian, that he has made me dizzy with?

RUF. Primita, ¿no podriamos hablar de algo más importante que ese sujeto?

ADE. Para mi todo es más importante que él. Diga usted.

RUF. ¿No seria oportuno que principiásemos á tratar de nuestros negocios[45] particulares?

ADE. Segun los que sean.

RUF. Yo aludia al testamento del tio difunto.

ADE. ¡Tanta prisa! Considere usted que he llegado á Madrid ayer.

RUF. Considere usted que el plazo para decidir nuestra suerte cumple[46] mañana.

ADE. En efecto, segun el testamento de don Gabriel, ó para mañana habia yo de estar casada con pariente suyo, ó al otro dia pasaba á usted el derecho á la herencia.

RUF. La llegada del testamento se ha retardado....

ADE. Por lo cual es imposible que se casen mañana los que hoy mismo aun no se conocian; así á entrambos nos estaria bien acordar una próroga lo más larga posible.

RUF. Lo más breve, diría yo; y lo que es por mí no la necesito.

ADE. ¿Usted ha tomado ya su resolucion?

RUF. Decisivamente.

ADE. Me figuro ya cuál será.

RUF. Dear cousin, could we not speak of something more important than this person?

ADE. Anything is more important to me than he. Speak.

RUF. Would it not be opportune that we begin to treat of our private business?

ADE. According to what it may be.

RUF. I allude to the will of our late uncle.

ADE. So quickly! Consider that I arrived at Madrid yesterday.

RUF. Consider that to-morrow is the time for deciding our fate.

ADE. It is so; according to the will of Don Gabriel, either I must be married to-morrow to a kinsman of his, or, on the next day, the right to the inheritance passes to you.

RUF. The arrival of the will has been delayed.

ADE. On account of that it is impossible that they who are not yet acquainted to-day can be married to-morrow; so it would be convenient to both of us to agree upon an extension of time, the longest possible.

RUF. The shortest I should say; and for me, there is no necessity for it.

ADE. You have already taken your resolution.

RUF. Decidedly.

ADE. I can imagine what it is.

RUF. No es difícil.

ADE. No, y por si á usted le cuesta trabajo explicarse, yo seré su intérprete.

RUF. Veamos.

ADE. Mujer que como yo necesita un apéndice para andar, mal puede inspirar una pasion repentina.

RUF. !Oh! eso....

ADE. Hombre que como usted ya no es criatura, y ha vivido casi siempre en Madrid, debe ser de paladar muy delicado.[47]

RUF. Es que[48] usted....

ADE. Por consiguiente mi primo no querrá casarse con su prima. ¿No es esto lo que iba usted á decirme en limpio?[49] Confíese usted que sí, que yo no me enfadaré por eso.

RUF. ¡Hola! ¿no se enfadará usted, primita? Eso es decir que usted me daria calabazas de buena gana. Es usted muy dueña.[50]

ADE. Ya, como que á usted no le pesaria librarse de una mujer contrahecha y hallarse con una herencia muy cabal.

RUF. Ni á usted le disgustaria que yo renunciase á su mano, dejándola con su libertad y la herencia. El argumento es aplicable á los dos.

ADE. Hay antecedentes en contra de usted. Usted ha sido siempre mas aficionado á galanteos que al matrimonio.

RUF. It is not difficult.

ADE. No, and in case it will be hard for you to explain, I will be your interpreter.

RUF. Let us see.

ADE. A woman who needs, as I do, an aid for walking, can poorly inspire a sudden passion.

RUF. Oh! as to that . . . .

ADE. A man who, like yourself, is no more a child, and who has almost always lived in Madrid, ought to have a very fastidious taste.

RUF. But you . . . .

ADE. Therefore my cousin does not wish to marry his cousin. Is not this, in two words, what you were going to say to me? Confess that it is, I will not be angry on account of that.

RUF. Hello! You will not be angry, dear cousin? That is to say, you would give me a refusal with good will. You are at liberty to do so.

ADE. Indeed, because you would not regret to get rid of a deformed woman, and to find yourself with a very plump inheritance.

RUF. Neither would you regret that I should renounce your hand, leaving you your liberty and the inheritance. The argument is applicable to both of us.

ADE. There are precedents against you. You have always been more inclined to gallantry than marriage.

RUF. Tampoco usted le habrá tenido grande aficion cuando no se ha casado.

ADE. ¿Tantos hombres hay capaces de querer á una coja?

RUF. ¿Hay muchas mujeres que quieran á un pobre?

ADE. Lo cierto es[51] que ayer usted no salió á recibirme.

RUF. Vine[52] hoy temprano.

ADE. Y se entretuvo usted á mi ventana con una jóven que suponia usted no era yo.

RUF. Pero esa jóven, que es usted, me agradó infinito.

ADE. Miéntras me vió usted en busto; que cuando me vió de cuerpo entero . . . .

RUF. Me sorprendió en efecto que la torcedura de los ojos se hubiera trasladado á una pierna; pero usted, en vez de mostrárseme amable, se burló de mí y se fué[53] á visitas con un advenedizo.

ADE. Porque usted no quiso acompañarme.

RUF. Porque usted me imposibilitó.

ADE. Señor don Rufino, valga la verdad. Usted no quiere casarse conmígo.

RUF. Eso es lo que yo he sospechado de usted.

ADE. Tal vez seriamos infelices casándonos.

RUF. You have not had great inclination since you have not been married.

ADE. How many men will love a lame girl?

RUF. How many women will love a poor man?

ADE. What is certain is that you did not come to receive me yesterday.

RUF. I came early to-day.

ADE. And you amused yourself at my window with a young lady whom you supposed was not I.

RUF. But that young lady, who is yourself, pleased me exceedingly.

ADE. When you saw my bust; but when you saw me at full length . . . .

RUF. I was surprised, in truth, that the twisting of the eyes should have passed over to a limb; but you, instead of being amiable toward me, laughed at me, and went visiting with a stranger.

ADE. Because you did not wish to accompany me.

RUF. Because you rendered me unable to do so.

ADE. Don Rufino, let the truth come out. You do not wish to marry me.

RUF. This is what I had expected from you.

ADE. Perhaps we would be unhappy marrying each other.

RUF. Si uno de los dos se empeña, de fijo.[54]

ADE. ¿No podriamos hacer una transaccion útil a uno y otro, ya que los dos queremos nuestra libertad, y por desgracia necesitamos dinero?

RUF. (*Aparte.* Ya capitula.) Segun y conforme.

ADE. ¿No podriamos partir la herencia?

RUF. Partirla, bien; pero ¿de qué suerte?

ADE. ¿De qué suerte? Señor, á medias.[55]

RUF. Querida prima, permitame usted una observacíon. Usted ha pedido la primera que se prolongue el plazo; usted ha declarado espontáneamente que no se incomodaria porque yo desistiera de pretender su mano; usted ha propuesto la primera que dividieramos los bienes del tio; usted, que es la que falta á la condicion del testamento, parece que debia contentarse con el reparto hecho por el testador.

ADE. Ya; la pension para mí y lo demás para usted.

RUF. En justicia eso debia ser.

ADE. ¡En justicia! La cuestion no era de justicia sino de delicadeza, y ahora veo que usted ni asomo de ella tiene.

RUF. ¡Prima! (*Aparte.*) Esto marcha.[56]

ADE. ¡Mire usted qué hombre, para quererle, para decidírse por él de hoy á mañana!

RUF. Surely, if one of us persists in it.

ADE. Could we not make a compromise, convenient to both parties, since we both desire our liberty and unfortunately need money?

RUF. (*Aside.*) She capitulates already. (*Aloud.*) According to the conditions.

ADE. Could we not divide the inheritance?

RUF. To divide it, well; but in what form?

ADE. In what form? Sir, by halving.

RUF. Dear cousin, permit me to make a remark. You have been the first to ask for an extension of time; you have spontaneously declared that you would not be offended should I desist from pretending to your hand; you have been the first to propose that we divide the estate of our uncle; it appears to me that you, who are the one who does not fulfil the conditions of the will, ought to be contented with the division made by the testator.

ADE. I understand, the pension for me, and the remainder for you.

RUF. In justice this ought to be.

ADE. In justice! The question is not of justice, but of delicacy; and now I see that you have not the least shade of it.

RUF. Cousin! (*Aside.*) This goes well.

ADE. Behold what a man to love, and to decide in his favor between to-day and to-morrow! An egotist, ruling only for vile in-

Un egoista, dominado solo por el vil interés, un mal pariente que abusa de la honradez y tierno corazon de una huérfana; que no quiere, ni puede, ni debe dar su mano sino á quien la merezca, á quien le pague su amor.

RUF. No es culpa mia si usted me le rehusa; y pues que tal es su decision .... (*Hace que se va, y dice aparte.*) Yo triunfo.

ADE. (*Aparte.* Me he precipitado sin necesidad; probemos el medio contraria.) Señor don Rufino ....

RUF. (*Volviendo.*) Señorita ....

ADE. (*Aparte.* Para desdecirse,[57] siempre hay tiempo.) Antes que rompamos del todo, exijo de usted una contestacion categórica.

RUF. ¿Sobre ...?

ADE. Sobre el asunto en cuestion. ¿Usted está pronto á ofrecerme su mano?

RUF. Bajo todos conceptos debo responder á usted y le respondo que sí.

ADE. Pues bien; disponga usted que se firmen nuestros espousales mañana.

RUF. (*aparte.* Esto va con segunda.) Hoy si usted quiere.

ADE. Hoy no, porque esta tarde la quiero destinar á una averiguacion previa. Quiero saber qué especie de relaciones mantiene usted con doña Gertrúdis Ciscon.

terest, a bad kinsman, who abuses honesty and the tender heart of an orphan; who does not wish, nor can she, nor ought she, to give her hand except to one who merits it, to one who repays her love.

RUF. It is not my fault if you refuse me, and since that is your decision .... (*He starts to go, and says aside.*) I triumph.

ADE. (*Aside.*) I have been precipitate without need; let me try the contrary way. (*Aloud.*) Don Rufino ....

RUF. (*Returning.*) Miss ....

ADE. (*Aside.*) There is always time for recanting. (*Aloud.*) Before we break entirely, I demand of you a positive answer.

RUF. Upon ....

ADE. Upon the matter in question. Are you ready to offer me your hand?

RUF. By all means I ought to answer you, and I answer, yes.

ADE. Well then, order that our marriage contract be signed to-morrow.

RUF. (*Aside.*) That is a secondary matter. (*Aloud.*) To-day, if you wish.

ADE. Not to-day, because I will dedicate this evening to a previous investigation. I want to know what kind of acquaintance you maintain with Miss Gertrude Ciscon.

RUF. (*Aparte!* Malo!) Me ha adelantado unos fondos.

ADE. Yo sabré la casa de esa señora, y la visitaré.

RUF. (*Aparte.* ¡Demonio!) Yo le daré á usted las señas.[58] (*Meliendo la mano en un bolsillo.*) No tengo aquí mí cartera[59]

ADE. No faltará donde escribirlas. (*Llama.*) Gregoria.

ESCENA VII.

GREGORIA, Dichos.

GREG. (*Dentro.*) Señora.

ADE. (*Alto.*) Un tintero y papel.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) Pondré las señas de mi antigua patrona, doña Tiburcia, y la haré fingirse doña Gertrúdis.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) Se me figura que está inquieto.

GREG. (*Saliendo.*) Aquí está el recado de escribir.[60]

ADE. Déjelo usted aquí y váyase. (*Gregoria pone el tintero y el papel en el velador inmediato al sofá, despues de lo cual se retira, miéntras don Rufino escribe.*)

RUF. (*Aside.*) Bad! (*Aloud.*) She has advanced me some capital.

ADE. I will learn this lady's house, and I will visit her.

RUF. (*Aside.*) Confound it! (*Aloud.*) I will give you her address (*Putting his hand in his pocket.*) I have not my pocket-book here.

ADE. Something to write on shall not be wanting. (*Calling.*) Gregoria.

SCENE VII.

GREGORIA: aforesaid persons.

GREG. (*Within.*) Miss.

ADE. (*Aloud.*) Ink and paper.

RUF. (*Aside.*) I will put down the address of my old hostess, Miss Tiburcia, and I will make her feign Miss Gertrude.

ADE. (*Aside.*) I imagine that he is embarrassed.

GREG. (*Entering.*) Here are the necessary things for writing.

ADE. Leave it there, and you may retire. (*Gregoria places the ink and paper on the small table, next the sofa, after which she retires, while Don Rufino writes.*)

ESCENA VIII.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

ADE. En dando las seis, tomo la muleta y la mantilla, y sea hora conveniente ó no sea, nos encajamos en casa de esa señora mi tio y yo.

RUF. La urgencia del caso lo disculpa. Aquí están las señas. Calle de Hortaleza, frente á la fuente de los galápagos.

ADE. Mire usted que yo he de sonsacar[61] por todos los medios posibles á doña Gertrúdis,

RUF. No tengo miedo.

ADE. Como usted haya tratado matrimonio con ella, yo lo he de saber; las viejas no niegan eso nunca.

RUF. Pero si lo niega, ¿se casará usted conmígo?

ADE. Como no haya inconveniente por usted, sí.

RUF. (*Aparte.*) Yo pondré remedio. El inconveniente que pudiera haber quedará zanjado ahora mismo. Yo soy ménos desconfiado que usted, y aunque necesito ciertos informes, quiero debérselos à usted misma. Si nos casamos, ¿dará usted al olvido su naciente inclinacion à don Fabian?

SCENE VIII.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

ADE. Upon its striking six, I will take my crutch and mantilla; and, whether the hour may be convenient or not, my uncle and I will go to that lady's house.

RUF. The urgency of the case excuses it. Here is the address. Hortaleza Street, opposite the fountain of the Tortoises.

ADE. Look out, as we will pump the secret out of Miss Gertrude by every possible means.

RUF. I am not afraid.

ADE. If you have agreed to marry her, I will know it. Old women never deny that.

RUF. But if she denies it, will you marry me?

ADE. If there is no obstacle on your side, yes.

RUF. (*Aside.*) I will find a remedy (*Aloud.*) The obstacle which might exist will be overcome directly. I am less mistrustful than you; and, though I need certain information, I want to owe it to yourself. Should we marry, will you forget your growing attachment for Don Fabian?

ADE. ¿A don Fabian? Aquí tenemos otra vez la manía del tio.

RUF. ¡Oh! pues cuando el tio lo cree, no es extraño que yo lo tema.

ADE. El tio y usted deliran.

RUF. Usted esta mañana le ha concedido á don Fabian una distincion . . . .

ADE. De que me hubiera guardado muy bien, si ese sujeto no me fuera del todo indiferente.[62]

RUF. Pues, primita, él no la mira á usted con indiferencia.

ADE. Suposicion.

RUF. Acabo de hacérselo confesar.

ADE. Permítame usted que lo dude. A mí no me ha hecho ni la más leve insinuacion.[63]

RUF. Pues no tardará en declararse.

ADE. Si se declara, le diré que me caso con usted, y se acabó la historia.

RUF. ¡Oh! dígaselo usted con todas las precauciones posibles, porque si no . . . .

ADE. ¿Qué sucederia?

RUF. Todo hombre tímido es sensible en extremo, y con una respuesta dura seria capaz ese infeliz de tirarse al canal. ¡Un primer amor malogrado![64]

ADE. ¿Un primer amor?

ADE. For Don Fabian? Here we have again my uncle's folly.

RUF. Oh! well, since the uncle believes it, it is not strange that I fear it.

ADE. Uncle and you are talking nonsense.

RUF. This morning you conceded to Don Fabian a distinction. . . . .

ADE. Of which I would have guarded myself well, if that person were not absolutely indifferent to me.

RUF. Well, dear cousin, he does not look upon you with indifference.

ADE. Nonsense.

RUF. I have just now obliged him to confess it.

ADE. Allow me to doubt it. He has not made even the slightest hint to me.

RUF. Well, he will not delay in declaring himself.

ADE. If he declares himself, I will tell him that I am going to marry you, and that is the end of the tale.

RUF. Oh! say it with every precaution possible; because, if not . . . .

ADE. What could happen?

RUF. Every timid man is extremely sensitive; and, at receiving a hard reply this unhappy man would be capable of throwing himself in the canal. A first love killed in the bud!

ADE. A first love?

ESCENA IX.

GREGORIA, Dichos.

GREG. Señorita.

ADE. ¿Qué hay?

GREG. (*Al oido á Adela.*) Don Fabian me ha dado con mucho sigilo un papel para usted.

ADE. (*Alto.*) ¡Don Fabian!

RUF. Si estorbo.....

ADE. Al contrario. Gregoria, repita usted, para que el señor lo oiga, lo que me acaba usted de decir.

GREG. Ya que usted lo manda, lo haré. Don Fabiancito ha llegado ahora á la puerta sudando como un pollo, me ha dejado este cucurucho[65] (*lo saca*), y me ha encargado que le dé á usted esta cartita.

ADE. (*Tomándola y dándosela á don Rufino sin abrirla.*) Hágame usted el favor de leerla; que yo (*tentando el cucurucho*) ya supongo su contenido. (*Hace una seña á Gregoria, y vase esta. Durante la escena siguiente se la ve algunas veces cruzar por el fondo.*)

SCENE IX.

GREGORIA, Aforesaid persons.

GREG. Miss.

ADE. What is it?

GREG. (*In the ear of Adela.*) Don Fabian has given me, with much secret, a letter for you.

ADE. (*Aloud.*) Don Fabian!

RUF. If I am in the way....

ADE. On the contrary. Gregoria, repeat, in order that the gentleman may hear what you have just now told me.

GREG. Since you order it, I will do so. The dear Don Fabian has just now reached the door sweating like a chicken; he left this parcel (*she draws it out,*) and has charged me to give you this little letter.

ADE. (*Taking it and giving it to Don Rufino without opening it.*) Do me the favor to read it, as I (*touching the parcel*) already surmise its contents. (*She makes a sign to Gregoria, who retires. During the following scene Gregoria is seen several times, crossing near the rear of the stage.*)

ESCENA X.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

RUF. Veamos (*Abre y lee.*) "Adelita, con el más vivo interés acabo de desempeñar la doble comision con que usted me ha honrado."

ADE. ¿No lo dije? Adelante, que ya vendrá lo bueno.

RUF. No se ria usted, que este diminutivo de *Adelita*, y este *vivo interés* no se han puesto aquí á humo de pajas.[66]

ADE. Prosiga usted.

RUF. (*Lee*) Comision con que me ha honrado, y que perteneciendole á usted no podia ménos de serme preciosa.[67] ¡Qué tal![68] ¿y esto?

ADE. Es pura cortesia y no más.

RUF. (*Lee.*) "Yo no he podido encontrar té mejor .... que el que despachan en la lonja [69] cuyas señas expreso abajo."

ADE. Y de eso ¿qué me dice usted?

RUF. (*Lee*) "Y del cual dejo á usted una muestra."

ADE. Aquí esta, si usted gusta ....

SCENE X.

ADELA, DON RUFINO.

RUF. Let me see. (*He opens and reads.*) "Adelita, with the most lively interest, I have just discharged the double commission with which you have honored me."

ADE. Did he not say so? Go on, the good part will come.

RUF. Do you not laugh that this diminutive of *Adela*, and this *lively interest* have been placed here without cause?

ADE. Proceed.

RUF. (*Reads.*) "Commission with which you have honored me, and which pertaining to you could not help being precious." What next! and this?

ADE. It is pure courtesy, and nothing more.

RUF. (*Reads.*) "I have not been able to find better tea than that which is sold in the store the address of which is expressed below."

ADE. And about that, what do you tell me?

RUF. (*Reads.*) "And of which I leave you a sample."

ADE. Here it is, if you please....

RUF. (*Tomando el cucurucho.*) Pues para muestra, lo ménos le ha traido á usted media libra. Regalar así quien apénas tiene para comer, digo, ¿es prueba de amor?

ADE. (*Aparte*) ¡Pobrecillo!

RUF. (*Lee.*) "Respecto á la criada, me han informado de una que gusta más de servir á una ama que de servir á un amo, cualidad rarísima, que en Madrid es inestimable, la verá usted mañana. Beso los piés .... etc—P. D. Además del té perla, del que yo tambien hago uso, hay en la misma lonja té negro, que el comerciante[70] me ha ponderado en su género por el mejor."

ADE. ¿No dice más?

RUF. No, señora.

ADE. ¡Oh! es menester que mi tio oiga esta derretida epístola amatoria. (*Yéndose*) Tio, tio (*Entra*[71] *en el gabinete.*)

ESCENA XI.

DON RUFINO.

Por mas que diga, no ha recibido mal la noticia del supuesto amor de Fabian.—¿Se pudiera sacar todavía más partido [72] de este papel? Yo me acuerdo de haber leido en una novela que dos personas se daban ciertos avisos

RUF. (*Taking the parcel.*) Certainly he has brought you, at least, half a pound for a sample. Say, such a present, made by one who has scarcely enough to eat, is it not a proof of love?

ADE. (*Aside.*) Poor fellow!

RUF. (*Reads.*) "Respecting the servant, I have received information of one who prefers to serve a mistress rather than a master, a very rare quality, which is estimable in Madrid; you will see her to-morrow. I present my compliments .... etc. P. S. Besides the pearl tea, of which I also make use, there is in the same store black tea which the grocer has extolled to me as the best of its kind."

ADE. Does he not say more?

RUF. No, Miss.

ADE. Oh! It is necessary that my uncle hears this melting amatory epistle. (*Going.*) Uncle, uncle. (*She enters the sitting-room.*)

SCENE XI.

DON RUFINO.

RUF. Whatever she may say, she has not received badly the news of the supposed love of Fabian.—Would it be possible to get more profit from this paper? I remember of having read in a novel of two persons giving each other certain information through a newspaper, in

TOM. Decia usted: "Compadézcase usted de mi cortedad, nunca ha sido mayor, pero nunca más fundada que ahora."

FAB. (*Aparte.* ¡Bestia de mí!) ¡Yo le hubiera estimado á usted tanto que me hubiese dado una voz . . . . !

TOM. Hubiera sido una lástima. Usted estaba en sus glorias hablando, y yo escuchándole. (*Sigue regando los tiestos.*)

FAB. (*Tomando una silla.*) Está visto, en hallándome solo y desocupado, necesito mordaza.[20]

TOM. (*Aparte y observando los movimientos de don Fabian.*) ¡Qué trajin traia allá solo en su cuarto! Parecia que eran dos, él y una señorita.—Se ha sentado, apuesto á que es por no hablar solo, si se pasea.—Mueve la cabeza hácia abajo. Yo ya le entiendo sus ademanes, estará diciendo entre sí: "¡Qué estrafalario, qué majadero[21] soy!"—Se encoge de hombros, eso significa: "¿Y qué remedio tiene? ¿qué le hemos de hacer?"—Ahora menea la cabeza, ladeándola hacia donde estoy yo, jurara que dice: "La Tomasa me ha oido; ¡eh! ¡para que no sepa todo el mundo mis conversaciones secretas!"—Mira hácia la puerta, es que espera á alguno.—Los tiestos ya están aviados, me voy. (*Vase.*)

TOM. You said: "Pity my bashfulness, it never has been greater, but never with more foundation than now."

FAB. (*Aside.*) What a dunce I am! (*Aloud.*) I should have thanked you so much, if you had called me . . . !

TOM. It would have been a pity. You were in the height of your glory speaking, and I listening to you. (*She proceeds watering the pots.*)

FAB. (*Taking a chair.*) It is a fact, I need a gag when I am alone, and at leisure.

TOM. (*Aside, and observing the movements of Don Fabian.*) What a fuss he made there alone in his room! It appeared there were two, he and a young lady. He has sat down: I bet it is that he may not speak to himself, as he would do if he walks. He moves his head downward. I already understand his gestures, he is saying to himself: "What a fool, what a bore, I am!" He shrugs his shoulders, that means: "And what remedy is there? What must I do." Now he raises his head, turning toward where I am, I will swear that he says: "Tomasa has heard me! Now, may not every one know my secret conversations!" He looks toward the door; he is expecting some one. I am through with the pots, and now I go. (*She goes out.*)

ESCENA IV.

DON FABIAN.

(*Permanece algunos instantes en silencio; pronuncia despues algunas expresiones en voz muy baja, y luego va subiendo progresivamente.*)

Esta manía de hablar solo .... No me sucederá otra vez. (*Pausa.*) La tal Adela .... Me ha mandado venir.—¿Qué he de hacer? Vendré.—La hablaré.—Don Rufino me ayudará.—Dicen que la gaditana me quiere; un hombre á quien una mujer distingue, debe hablarla con resolucion. (*Se levanta.*) Con resolucion, pero con miramiento; pues aunque ella haya puesto los ojos en mí ántes que yo en ella, no es justo que una señorita de modo[22] sea la primera que se declare. A mí me toca decir que la quiero .... y por Dios que se me figura que no mentiré.—¡Una coja! Y bien mirado,[23] ¿valgo yo lo que ella? Si ella es coja, yo soy tartamudo y lerdo y patizambo.[24] Nada, nada; tengo estudiada mi arenga, y así que llegue ocasion, la espeto de corrido, sin mirar á Adela para no turbarme.—"Señorita, compadézcase usted de mi cortedad, nunca ha sido mayor; pero nunca más fundada que

SCENE IV.

DON FABIAN.

(*He remains some moments in silence; afterward he pronounces some expressions in a very low tone, and then he increases by degrees.*)

FAB. This mania of speaking alone. It will not happen again. (*Pauses.*) Miss Adela. She has sent for me to come. What must I do? I will come. I will speak to her. Don Rufino will aid me. They say that the lady from Cadiz loves me; a man whom a woman distinguishes ought to speak to her with resolution. (*Rises.*) With resolution, but with consideration; since, although she may have placed her eyes on me, before I mine on her, it is not just that a lady of dignity be the first to declare herself. It falls to me to say that I love her . . . and by heaven, I imagine that I will not lie. A lame girl! And well esteemed! Am I worth as much as she? If she is lame, I am stammering and slow, and bandy-legged. Nothing, nothing. I have studied my speech; and, as soon as the occasion arrives, I will deliver it right along, without looking at Adela, that I may not be embarrassed. "Miss, pity my bashfulness, it never has been greater, but never with more foundation than now. Your

ahora. Su hermosura de usted . . . ."—Pero si miro al suelo al hablar de su hermosura, va á creer[25] que es pulla, porque entónces lo único que puedo verla son los piés. Debo decir, " Ese hermoso semblante, esos divinos ojos, ese talle de sílfida, ese . . . ."

ESCENA V.

ADELA, el Criado, DON FABIAN.

ADE. ¡Oh señor don Fabian! Ya le tenemos á usted por acá?

FAB. ¡Oh Adelita! (*Aparte.*) Me cortó el hilo á lo mejor.

ADE. ¡Jesus! ¡qué cansada vengo! ¡qué calor traigo! ¿Tiene usted la bondad de acercarme una silla?

FAB. Con mil amores. ¿Va usted á descansar aquí un rato?

ADE. Sí, señor, y si usted gusta de hacerme compañía miéntras viene mi tio . . . .

FAB. Yo. Adelita . . . . (*Aparte.*) Rufino no está aquí, pero ¿como resisto yo al ruego de una señora?

ADE. (*Al criado.*) Pedro, haga usted el favor de llevar esa mantilla á mí cuarto. (*Vase el criado.*)

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Nos dejan solos, y ya oscurece.

beauty." But, if I look at the ground in speaking of her beauty, she will believe that it is sarcasm, because the only part that I can see of her there are her feet. I ought to say: "This beautiful face, these divine eyes, this form of sylph, this . . . "

SCENE V.

ADELA, the SERVANT, DON FABIAN.

ADE. Oh, Don Fabian! Are you here already?

FAB. Adela! (*Aside.*) She cuts the thread in the best part of it.

ADE. Heavens, how tired I am! How warm it is! Will you be so kind as to bring me a chair?

FAB. With the greatest of pleasure. Are you going to rest yourself here a little while?

ADE. Yes, sir, and if you please, keep me company until my uncle comes . . .

FAB. I, Miss Adela . . . (*Aside.*) Rufino is not here; but how may I resist the request of a lady?

ADE. (*To the servant.*) Peter, do me the favor of carrying this mantilla to my room. (*The servant goes out.*)

FAB. (*Aside.*) They leave us alone, and already it is getting dark.

ESCENA VI.

GREGORIA, que sale de puntillas y se esconde detras de unas matas; ADELA, DON FABIAN.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) Como es tan tímido, conviene hablarle con la mayor suavidad.

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Ahora, ¿quién conoce que esta mujer es coja?

GREG. (*Aparte.*) Aquí me coloco.

ADE. Señor don Fabian, yo deseaba mucho este momento.

FAB. ¿Sí? Vaya, pues.... pues Dios se lo pague á usted.

ADE. Por otro lado lo temo tambien un poquito.

FAB. Lo mismo me sucede á mí.

ADE. Principio por manifestar que he leido su carta detenidamente, que me he enterado bien de ella, y por todas y cada una de sus cláusulas le debo á usted un agradecimiento sin límites.

FAB. Usted me avergüenza. Usted merece que uno se.... !Vaya![26]

ADE. Pero tengo que hacer sobre el particular varias observasiones.

FAB. Yo no he hecho más que repetir lo que me han dicho en la lonja y en la agencia. Si el té ó la criada no son lo que usted desearia....

SCENE VI.

Gregoria enters on tiptoe, and hides herself behind some shrubs: ADELA, DON FABIAN.

ADE. (*Aside.*) As he is so timid it is necessary to speak with the greatest mildness.

FAB. (*Aside.*) Now, who knows that this woman is lame?

GREG. (*Aside.*) Here I place myself.

ADE. Don Fabian, I desired this moment much.

FAB. Yes. Well, then . . . may God recompense you.

ADE. On the other hand, I also fear it a little.

FAB. And I as well.

ADE. I begin by declaring that I have read your letter attentively, that I am thoroughly acquainted with it; and, for all and each one of its paragraphs, I owe you unbounded thanks.

FAB. You confound me. You deserve that any one may . . . undoubtedly!

ADE. But I have to make several observations about this particular matter.

FAB. I have done nothing more than repeat what was told me in the store, and at the agency. If the tea, or the servant are not what you desired. . . .

ADE. No se trata[27] de mis encargos, señor don Fabian, sino del que los ha desempeñado.

FAB. Ya, se trata de mí.

ADE. Sí, señor, mi tio se proponia verle á usted mañana, y esto me obliga á verme ántes con usted.

FAB. Bien haya el tio que me proporciona esta .... este ....

ADE. No le debe estar muy agradecido usted, porque él no piensa de usted tan favorablemente como su sobrina.

FAB. ¿No? pues merezca yo el favor de la sobrina, y mas que se pongan contra mí todos los tios del universo. (*Aparte.*) Esto no ha salido mal.

ADE. Podré acaso ceder á la fuerza de las circunstancias; pero el aprecio que hago de usted sera inalterable.

FAB. Adelita hermosa .... (*Aparte.*) ¿Qué mas claro lo ha de decir?

ADE. Por lo mismo, y confiada en la honradez de usted, quiero consultarle sobre mi porvenir, quiero poner en su mano mi suerte.

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Esta es la ocasion crítica para mí arenga.

ADE. Usted decidirá segun su delicadeza le inspire.

FAB. (*Entusiasmado.*) ¿Adela usted á mi

ADE. I do not speak of my commissions, but of him who has discharged them.

FAB. Yes, you are speaking of me.

ADE. Yes, sir, my uncle proposes to see you to-morrow, and this obliges me to meet you before.

FAB. Much happiness to the uncle who affords me this . . . that. . . . .

ADE. You ought not to be thankful to him, because he does not think of you as favorably as his niece.

FAB. No? Then let me deserve the favor of his niece, and I don't care if all the uncles in the universe are against me. (*Aside.*) That was not said badly.

ADE. Perhaps I will yield to the force of circumstances; but the appreciation which I have of you will be unalterable.

FAB. Beautiful Adela . . . (*Aside.*) How can she say it more clearly?

ADE. For the same reason, and confiding in your honesty, I wish to consult you about my future, I wish to place my fate in your hands.

FAB. (*Aside.*) This is the critical occasion for my speech.

ADE. You will decide according as your delicacy inspires you.

FAB. (*Enthusiastically.*) You appeal to my

delicadeza? Pues sí, pues bien, ya sé lo que me corresponde hacer.

ADE. Oigame usted.

FAB. Perdone usted, óigame primero. (*Aparte.* Y está muy oscuro, y á favor de las tinieblas tendré ménos empacho.) Señorita, compadézcase usted de mí cortedad, nunca ha sido mayor, pero nunca mas fundada que ahora. (*Viendo salir á Tomasa con una luz.*) ¡Ah!

ESCENA VII.

TOMASA, con un farol de reverbero ; [28] Dichos.

TOM. (*Cruzando la escena.*) El farol del pasillo se me habia olvidado. (*Vase.*)

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Esa maldita luz me ha dejado ciego.

ADE. Animo, siga usted. (*Aparte.*) El pobrecillo me quiere de veras.[29]

FAB. Pues como iba diciendo . . . . (*Aparte.*) Ya no sé donde iba.) ¡Ah!—Su hermosura de usted, ese lindo talle, esas gracias que estoy viendo . . . .

ADE. ¿A oscuras las ve usted, don Fabian?

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Ya me perdí. Los ojos del alma . . . . penetran . . . . descubren . . . . Y cuando uno se halla al lado de una . . . . de una

delicacy? Then, yes, then, well; I already know what I should do.

ADE. Hear me.

FAB. Pardon, hear me first. (*Aside.*) And it is very dark, and by favor of the darkness, I I will have less timidity. (*Aloud.*) Miss, pity my timidity, it has never been greater, but never with more foundation than now. (*Seeing Tomasa enter with a light.*)

SCENE VII.

TOMASA, with a reflector, ADELA and FABIAN.

TOM. (*Crossing the stage.*) I had forgotten the lantern of the hall. (*She goes out.*)

FAB. (*Aside.*) This confounded light has made me blind.

ADE. Courage, proceed. (*Aside.*) The poor fellow really loves me.

FAB. Then, as I was saying . . . (*Aside*) Indeed, I do not know where I was. (*Aloud.*) Ah! Your beauty, that fine form, these graces which I am seeing. . . .

ADE. Do you see them, Don Fabian, through the darkness?

FAB. (*Aside.*) I am lost. (*Aloud.*) The eyes of the soul . . . penetrate . . . discover . . . And when one find himself at the side of a . . . of a beautiful woman . . . and the resources are wanting . . . our own resources. . . . (*Looking*

hermosa . . . . y le faltan los recursos . . . . los recursos propios.[30] (*Mirando hácia la puerta.*) tambien los ajenos . . . .[31] entónces no tiene más recurso que recurrir . . . . que recurrir á decir . . . . (*Cambiando rápidamente de tono.*) A decir que si á usted le parece, suspenderemos esta conversacion hasta que venga don Rufino.

ADE. ¿Como? ¿Rufino ha de venir?

FAB. Segun creo, no tardará.[32]

ADE. Conviene que no nos vea juntos.

GREG. (*Aparte.*) Aquí estoy yo para suplirle. (*Llégase á una reja quedito, y dice á las personas que se supone están dentro:*) Atencion.

ADE. Aunque solo nos conocemos de hoy, por lo que me han dicho de usted y por la idea que da de sí mismo al momento que se le habla, estoy segura de que es un jóven juicioso y de buena familia.

FAB. Mi familia, aunque pobre, era honrada como la que mas. Y digo *era*, porque estoy en que de ella solo he quedado yo, y acaso un primo segundo ó tercero, cuyo nombre ignoro, y de quien nunca he tenido noticia. Porque ha de saber usted que aunque me llaman Fabian Huronera, ni soy Huronera ni soy Fabian.

ADE. Bien, ya me explicará usted eso despues.

FAB. Un efecto de mi cobardia. Cuando

toward the door) and also those of others . . . then he has no other resource than to recur . . . than to recur to say . . . (*Rapidly changing his tone.*) To say that if it is agreeable to you, we will suspend this conversation until Don Rufino comes.

ADE. How? Will Don Rufino come?

FAB. I think he will come soon.

ADE. It is not fitting that he see us together.

GREG. (*Aside.*) Here I am to fill his place. (*She approaches a shutter softly, and says to the persons supposed to be within.*) Attention.

ADE. Although we have known each other but to-day, from what I have been told about you, and from the idea which you gave of yourself from the very moment you were spoken to, I am sure that you are a prudent young man, and of good family.

FAB. My family, although poor, was honorable as the best. I say, *was*, because I believe I am the only one remaining of it, and perhaps a second or third cousin whose name I do not know, and of whom I have never had any news; because you should know, that although they call me Fabian Huronera, I am neither Huronera, nor Fabian.

ADE. Well, you will explain this afterward.

FAB. A result of my cowardice. When I

vine de Asturias á Madrid, me trocó el nombre el alcalde del barrio, al darme el padron.

ADE. Un yerro casual, ya entiendo.

FAB. Fuí al otro dia'[33] le hallé despachando á una porcion de gente y le dije: "Señor alcalde, vengo á hacer á usted presente,[34] con el debido respeto, que ha padecido una equivocacion."—"Yo no me equivoco nunca," me replicó muy grave, "vaya usted con Dios, y déjeme despachar. No piensan ustedes sino en desconceptuar á la autoridad pública. Ya se ve;[35] como dijo que él era infalible, debí creer que quien se habia equivocado de nombre hasta aquella fecha era yo; y así me rétiré pidiéndole mil perdones, y resuelto á ser don Fabian hasta nuevo empadronamiento.

ADE. Atiéndame usted—Una tia mia carnal[36] se casó....

FAB. Sí, con un tio carnal de don Rufino, ya sé la historia....

ADE. Sabrá tambien usted que el tio murió en América dejando un caudal....

FAB. Sí, muy corto.

ADE. No, muy decente, renta mas de dos mil duros anuales.

FAB. ¿Eso renta?

ADE. Y todo lo heredaré yo, si en un término dado me caso con un pariente de mi tio politico.

came from Asturias to Madrid, the Alcalde of the ward changed my name, on registering me.

ADE. An accidental error, I understand.

FAB. I went the next day! I found him attending to a lot of people and I said: "Sir Alcalde, I come to call your attention, with all due respect, to a mistake that you have made." —"I never make a mistake," he replied gravely, "farewell and leave me to attend to my business. You are thinking only of discrediting public authority." Naturally, as he said he was infallible, I ought to believe that he who had made a mistake in his name, until that date, was myself; and so I retired asking him a thousand pardons, and I resolved to be Don Fabian, until a new registration.

ADE. Be attentive to me, an aunt of mine was married . . .

FAB. Yes, with an uncle of Don Rufino. I know the story already.

ADE. You know also that the uncle died in America leaving a fortune. . . .

FAB. Yes, very small.

ADE. No, very decent; income of more than two thousand dollars annually.

FAB. This income?

ADE. And I will inherit all, if in a given time I am married with a kinsman of my uncle.

FAB. ¡Qué me dice usted!

ADE, Pero si no, don Rufino lo hereda todo.

FAB. ¿Todo? (*Aparte.*) Pues me ha engañado.

ADE. Ménos una pension de seis mil reales [37] para mí.

FAB. (*Aparte.*) Ahora comprendo la pulla de los seis mil reales. ¡Habrá pícaro!

ADE. Y lo peor[38] es que el término para mí decision cumple mañana.

FAB. ¿Mañana?

ADE. De modo que me hallo en la alternativa siguiente, ó prometer mañana casarme con mi primo, que es un buen perillan ó perder la herencia y reducirme á una triste pension.[39] ¿Qué me aconsejaria usted que hiciera?

FAB. ¿Con que si usted se inclina á otro que su primo, tiene que sacrificar las conveniencias al amor? Yo no sabia eso.

ADE. ¿No?

FAB. Ni una palabra. Si yo hubiera tenido la menor idea de que usted podia ser, así, rica, ¿juzga ustéd que me hubiera atrevido á pensar . . . ? Yo estaba en la inteligencia[40] de que usted en ningun caso podia heredar más que la consabida pension.

ADE. ¡Ah! ¿usted me tenia por pobre?

FAB. Por tan pobre como yo. Unos seis mil reales vendré á ganar al año.

FAB. What do you tell me!

ADE. But, if not, Don Rufino inherits all.

FAB. All? (*Aside.*) Then he has deceived me.

ADE. Except an annuity of three hundred dollars for myself.

FAB. (*Aside.*) Now I comprehend the jest of the three hundred dollars. What a knave!

ADE. And the worst is that the term for my decision expires to-morrow.

FAB. To-morrow?

ADE. So that I find myself in the following alternative: either to-morrow to promise to marry my cousin, who is a big rake, or to lose the inheritance, and reduce myself to a mean annuity! What would you advise me to do?

FAB. Then, if you favor another than your cousin, you must sacrifice fortune for love? I did not know that.

ADE. No.

FAB. Not a word. Had I the least idea that you were so rich a woman, do you believe that I could have dared to think . . . ? I was under the impression that in no case could you inherit more than the said annuity.

ADE. Ah! Did you think I was poor.

FAB. As poor as I. I earn about three hundred dollars a year.

ADE. No es gran cosa, seguramente.

FAB. ¿Qué ha de ser? Y pudiendo usted disfrutar cuarenta y seis mil....

ADE. ¿Con que, en su opinion de usted, debo casarme con don Rufino?

FAB. (*Con tristeza.*) En mi opinion.... En mi opinion, Adelita, usted es una jóven que merece disfrutar todas las prosperidades de la vida, y mas fácil es que lo consiga usted con la herencia que sin la herencia.

ADE. ¿Cree usted que la felicidad se mide por el dinero?

FAB. El dinero tiene su mérito, y jamás lo he conocide yo como ahora.

ADE. Pero es que yo no quiero á mi primo.

FAB. Si usted es su esposa, usted cumplirá sus deberes, usted le querrà.

ADE. Es que[41] él tampoco me quiere á mí.

FAB. ¡Como si fuera fácil vivir á su lado de usted sin amarla!

ADE. Es que yo estoy persuadida de que él huye[42] tambien de unirse conmigo.

FAB. ¿Es cierto que trata de casarse con una vieja?

ADE. Por desgracia no.

FAB. ¿No? Pues tiene usted razon, que es una desgracia muy grande.

ADE. El quiere que la boda se deshaga por mí para llevarse la herencia.

ADE. It is not a great thing, surely.

FAB. What, must it be? And you, being able to enjoy twenty-three hundred dollars. . . .

ADE. Then, in your opinion, I ought to marry Don Rufino.

FAB. (*With sadness.*) In my opinion . . . In my opinion, Adelita, you are a young lady who deserve to enjoy all the pleasures of life; and you may attain them more easily with the inheritance than without it.

ADE. Do you believe that happiness is measured by money?

FAB. Money has its worth, and never have I recognized it as now.

ADE. But I do not love my cousin.

FAB. If you become his wife, you will fulfil your duties; you will love him.

ADE. But he does not love me.

FAB. As if it would be easy to live at your side without loving you.

ADE. But I am persuaded that he also shrinks from marrying me.

FAB. It is certain that he is trying to marry an old woman.

ADE. Unfortunately, no.

FAB. No? Then you are right, that is a very great misfortune.

ADE. He wishes that the engagement be broken by me, in order to get hold of the inheritance.

FAB. ¡Qué iniquidad! Yo iba á aconsejar à usted que le cogiera la palabra á su primo, que se casara con él y le obligase á que la quisiera á usted con el alma y la vida; pero ya ¡un demontre!

ADE. Hubiera sido un consejo muy generoso, pero....

FAB. Pero muy necio. ¡Hola, hola! ¿Luego el primito se figura que usted no vale más que la herencia del indiano y todas las Indias? Pues bueno, ármese usted de resolucion, enfádese usted.

ADE. Bien.

FAB. Y cuando el primo venga, dígale que usted se estima demasiado á sí propia para unirse con un hombre que no tiene entrañas ni honor.—Y sepa usted que esto es verdad.

ADE. Así lo acreo.

FAB. Dígale usted que se guarde, en hora buena ó mala, esa herencia que tanto codicia; que á él no le aprovechará de nada porque la consumirá en cuatro dias,[43] y á usted no le hace falta para ser feliz como lo ha sido hasta hoy.

ADE. Tambien eso es verdad.

FAB. Y que para que conozca la mujer que pierde, va usted á casarse con un hombre á quien ama y que adora en usted.

ADE. Y eso ¿será verdad?

FAB. What injustice! I was going to advise you that you should oblige your cousin to keep his word, marry, and force him to love you with his soul and life, but now, a demon!

ADE. You would have given very generous advice, but . . .

FAB. But very foolish. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Then the good cousin imagines that you are not worth more than the inheritance of the Indian, and all the Indias? Good, arm yourself with resolution, become angry.

ADE. Well.

FAB. And when your cousin comes, tell him that you esteem yourself too much to marry a man who has neither heart nor honor . . . And you know that this is true.

ADE. I believe so.

FAB. You may tell him to guard in a good and evil hour this inheritance that he covets so much; that it will prove to him of no account, because he will consume it in a few days, and that you were not in want of it, to be happy as you have always been.

ADE. That is also the truth.

FAB. And, in order that he may know the woman he has lost, tell him that you are going to marry a man whom you love, and who adores you.

ADE. And will that be true?

FAB. En usted consiste.

ADE. En mí solo no.

FAB. Sí tal, porque á la dama toca elegir.

ADE. Y al galan proponer.

FAB. Tal puede ser él que no se atreva á ponerse en candidatura.

ADE. ¿Quiere usted que le diga las cualidades que desearia yo en un esposo, y encargarse de buscarme uno?

FAB. ¿Uno? (*Aparte.*) Animo, esto se prepara bien. Lo que es uno, ya pudiera yo indicarle.

ADE. Pues yo no necesito dos.

FAB. Es que tiene tantos peros[44] el tal, que dudo si será de recíbo.

ADE. ¿Es hombre de bien?

FAB. Si pero bastante simplon.

ADE. ¿Será capaz de quererme?

FAB. ¡Oh! mucho, pero exigirá de usted otro tanto.

ADE. ¿Será aplicado y trabajador como su esposa?

FAB. Sí, pero hasta ahora poco le ha lucido su trabajo.

ADE. ¿Gastará buen genio? ¿Reñirá con su mujer?

FAB. Hasta la presente no ha reñido con nadie; pero se ha burlado de él todo el mundo.[45]

FAB. It depends on you.

ADE. On me alone? No.

FAB. Yes, indeed, it falls to the lady to choose.

ADE. And to the lover to propose.

FAB. Perhaps he's such that he dare not present himself as a candidate.

ADE. Do you wish that I name the qualities which I would desire in a husband, and charge you to find me one?

FAB. One? (*Aside.*) Courage, this is preparing well. (*Aloud.*) As to one, I could now name him.

ADE. Well, I do not need two.

FAB. But that one has so many "buts," that I doubt if he will be acceptable.

ADE. Is he an honest man?

FAB. Yes, but somewhat of a simpleton.

ADE. Will he be capable of loving me?

FAB. Oh, very much, but he will exact as much from you.

ADE. Will he be active and industrious, as his wife.

FAB. Yes, but until now his work has been of very little profit to him.

ADE. Has he a good temper? Will he quarrel with his wife?

FAB. Until this moment he has quarrelled with nobody, but he has been cheated by everybody.

ADE. ¿Sí? Pues yo me encargo de satisfacerle en nómbre del género humano.

FAB. ¡Es Posible! ?Está usted resuelta....?

ADE. A no rehusar mi mano á ese sujeto, siempre que....[46]

FAB. Siempre que se resuelva él....

ADE. A pedirla.

FAB. Pues.... la pide.... la pido.

ADE. Yo la concedo.

FAB. Y yo la.... la.... la....

GREG. (*Llegándose de pronto y dando á don Fabian la mano de Adela*) Hombre, tómela usted con mil santos.

FAB. ¡Huy! ¡qué vergüenza! teniamos un testigo.

GREG. (*Aparte.*) Y más de dos.

ADE. No me importa ya que todo el mundo[45] lo sepa.

FAB. ¿No? ¡Canario! pues á mí tampoco. Ya es tiempo de sacar los piés de las alforjas.[47] (*Besa repetidas veces la mano de Adela.*)

ESCENA VIII.

DON SILVESTRE; TOMASA, con una luz; Dichos

SILV. (*A Tomasa.*) Muchacha, alumbra. (*Viendo á don Fabian y Adela.*) ¡Bravo, señoritos, bravísimo!

ADE. Yes? Then I charge myself to satisfy him in the name of the human race.

FAB. Is it possible? Are you resolved?

ADE. Not to refuse my hand to this person, provided that. . . .

FAB. Provided that he is resolved?

ADE. To ask it.

FAB. Then . . . he asks it . . . I ask it.

ADE. I grant it.

FAB. And I, it . . . it . . . it.

GREG. (*Rising quickly and giving Adela's hand to Don Fabian.*) Man, take it with a thousand saints.

FAB. Alas! What a shame! We have had a witness.

GREG. (*Aside.*) And more than two.

ADE. It does not matter to me, that all the world knows it.

FAB. No? Good! Well to me neither. It is now time to throw aside all bashfulness? (*He kisses Adela's hand repeatedly.*)

SCENE VIII.

DON SILVESTRE, TOMASA, with a light: AFORESAID PEOPLE.

SILV. (*To Tomasa.*) Girl, bring a light. (*Seeing Don Fabian and Adela.*) Good, my friends, very good!

FAB. ¡Ay Jesus! (*Se aparta confundido d un lado; Gregoria y Tomasa despues de haber hablado entre sí un instante se retiran; la luz ha quedad o sobre un mesa.*)

SILV. Teniendo tú aquí tan buena ocupacion,[48] ¡bien podia yo estar aguardándote un siglo en casa de aquella señora!

ADE. Bastante le aguardé yo á usted.

SILV. ¿En casa de doña Gertrúdis?

ADE. Sí, señor, segun convinimos.

SILV. Si vengo yo de allí, y me ha dicho que no has parecido.

ADE. Se ha equivocado, á Pedro se le puede preguntar.

SILV. Ignoro por qué me lo ha negado doña Gertrúdis. En fin, ya sabrá que se te cumple tu gusto. Rufino, en efecto le ha dado á la vieja palabra de matrimonio, y ella jura que le sabrá impedir que se case contigo.

FAB. ¿De veras?

ADE. Tio, yo no lo entiendo á usted, doña Gertrúdis me ha sostenido que todo eso es pura suposicion.

SILV. A mí me ha demostrado que es verdad, y con pruebas irrecusables.

ADE. Si se ha reido de mí cuando le he hecho esa pregunta.

SILV. Pues cuando yo le ha hablado de ello, ha llorado como una Magdalena.

FAB. Heavens! (*He stands at the side confused: Gregoria and Tomasa, after having spoken together a moment, retire: the light remains on a table.*)

SILV. As you were employing yourself so well, I could remain waiting for you a century in that lady's house!

ADE. I waited sufficiently long for you.

SILV. In Miss Gertrude's house?

ADE. Yes, sir, as we agreed.

SILV. If I come from there, and she has told me that you have not appeared?

ADE. She is mistaken, you may ask Peter.

SILV. I am ignorant why Miss Gertrude denied it. Finally, you will know that your wish is fulfilled. Rufino, in fact, has promised the old lady marriage, and she swears that she can prevent his marriage with you.

FAB. Truly?

ADE. Uncle, I do not understand you; Miss Gertrude has assured me that it is all purely invention.

SILV. She has demonstrated to me that it is true by unimpeachable proofs.

ADE. But she laughed at me when I asked this question.

SILV. Well, when I spoke to her about it, she wept like a Magdalene.

ADE. No creia yo capaz de arrojar una lágrima á una mujer tan fria y tan sosa.

SILV. Al contrario, si es una viejecita muy lista.

ADE. ¿Lista? ¡Con aquel corpanchon de un par de quintales![49]

SILV. Si es delgada.

ADE. Pero altona.[50]

SILV. No tal, chiquita, muy elegante, postizo negro.

ADE. La doña Gertrúdis que ví yo, viste mal[51] y gasta peruca rubia.

FAB. O las doñas Gertrúdis son dos ó esa mujer cambia de genio y de figura á cada visita. Vamos á ver, ¿dónde vive sa dama pelirubia y pelinegra?

ADE. Calle de Hortaleza, frente á la fuente.

SILV. Eso es, yo no he podido acompañar á mi sobrina, porque tenia antes otras cosas que hacer; pero segun las señas que dejó don Rufino, esa fuente tiene por distintivo unos galápagos.

ADE. Justamente.

FAB. Así es.

SILV. Pues bien, desde aquí me dirigi á la puerta del Sol;[52] allí pregunté, y me pusieron en una calle toda de tiendas.

FAB. La calle de la Montera, sin duda.

ADE. I did not believe a woman so cold and insipid capable of shedding a tear.

SILV. On the contrary, she is a very spry old woman.

ADE. Spry? With that huge frame of two hundred pounds!

SILV. But she is very slender.

ADE. But very tall?

SILV. No, indeed, very small, very elegant, with black artificial hair.

ADE. The Miss Gertrude that I saw dresses shabbily, and wears a light wig.

FAB. Either there are two Miss Gertrudes, or that woman changes her temper and her figure to each visitor. Let us see, where does this light-haired, black-haired woman live?

ADE. Hortaleza Street, opposite the fountain.

SILV. That is so, I could not accompany my niece, because I had to do some other things first; but, according to the directions which Don Rufino left, this fountain has some tortoises, as a sign.

ADE. Exactly.

FAB. It is so.

SILV. Well then, from here I went to the Puerta del Sol; I inquired there, and was placed in a street, composed wholly of stores.

FAB. Montera Street, without doubt.

SILV. Esa misma. Ello es que me dijeron: "Siga usted esta acera de la derecha, y no pare hasta encontrar la fuente de los galápagos." Seguí, hallé una fuente grande....

ADE. Chica.

SILV. Grande, con sus dos galápagos de bronce.

ADE. De piedra.

SILV. No tal, de bronce, interpolados por más señas,[53] con dos ranas del mismo metal.

FAB. Esa es la fuente de la Red de San Luis.

SILV. ¿Hay acaso por allí[54] dos fuentes adornadas de galápagos?

FAB. Sí, señor, hay una al extremo de la calle de la Montera, y otra en la calle de Hortaleza, mucho más arriba.

SILV. Pues digole á usted que este Madrid es un galapagar. Pero sea lo que fuera; yo, llegado que hube á la fuente susodicha, pregunté en una lonja si vivia por allí una doña Gertrúdis Ciscon, y me contestaron que en el primer piso de aquella casa. Subí al segundo piso, me anuncié, me recibieron, y no cabe duda en que aquella es la doña Gertrúdis verdadera, porque delante de mí envió un recado para que buscaran á don Rufino à fin de carearle conmigo. La lástima fué que no se le encontró.

SILV. The same. This is what they said: "Follow this right-hand side-walk, and do not stop until arriving at the fountain of the tortoises." I went on, I found a large fountain . . . .

ADE. A small one.

SILV. Large, with its two tortoises of bronze.

ADE. Of stone.

SILV. No, indeed, of bronze, having between them, as a better sign, two frogs of the same metal.

FAB. This is the fountain of the Net of San Luis.

SILV. Are there, perhaps, two fountains, near each other, ornamented with tortoises?

FAB. Yes, sir, there is one at the extreme end of Montera street, and another in Hortaleza street, much further up.

SILV. Well, I tell you that this Madrid is a tortoise pond. But, be that as it may, I, having reached the said fountain, inquired in a store if Miss Gertrude Ciscon lived near there, and they told me that she lived in the first story. I announced myself. I was received, and there is no doubt but that she is the true Miss Gertrude; because, in my presence, she sent a messenger to look for Don Rufino with the intention of placing him face to face with me. It is a pity that he was not found.

ADE. Vamos, la Gertrúdis que yo hallé debe ser una solemne embustera; esto ha sido una falsa de ese enredador de Rufino, que no dice palabra de verdad.

SILV. Poco à poco;[55] él fué el que me insinuó que te inclinabas á don Fabian, y segun las trazas no ha mentido en eso.

ADE. Mintió en la fecha, porque entónces estaba yo muy distante de pensar como ahora.

FAB. ¿Con que mintió, eh? ¡Qué picardía! El me lo dijo, y yo lo creí.

ADE. Afortunadamente no me engañó al asegurarme esta mañana que usted me consagraba su afecto.

FAB. ¿Esta mañana? Pues tambien eso es mentira, entónces todavia no pensaba yo en usted.

ADE. ¿Será posible?

SILV. Segun veo, cada uno de ustedes estaba muy satisfecho de que era querido, y á ninguno de los dos le habia pasado por la imaginacion[56] el querer al otro.

FAB. ¡Vírgen de Atocha!

ADE. Otro embuste de mi primito, pero á lo ménos es innegable que el señor me ha escrito esta carta. (*Se la da á don Fabian.*)

FAB. (*Mirándola á la luz que hay en la mesa.*) A ver.[57]—Sí, señores, mi carta es ésta,

ADE. Well! the Gertrude whom I found must be a big fraud; this has been a farce of that deceiver Rufino, who does not speak a word of truth.

SILV. Do not be so quick; it was he who insinuated to me that you favored Don Fabian, and according to appearances, he has not lied in this.

ADE. He has lied as to the date, because then I was very far from thinking as I do now.

FAB. Then he lied, eh? What knavery! He told me, and I believed him.

ADE. Luckily he did not deceive me in assuring me this morning that you were in love with me.

FAB. This morning? This is also a lie, for then had I not thought of it.

ADE. Can it be possible?

SILV. From what I see, each one of you was very well satisfied that he was loved, and to neither had it crossed the imagination of loving the other.

FAB. Virgin of Atocha!

ADE. Another lie of my dear cousin's; but, at least, it is undeniable that the gentleman has written this letter. (*She gives it to Don Fabian.*)

FAB. (*Observing it by the light which is on the table.*) Let me see. Yes, this is my letter,

no hay duda. (*Lee.*) "Adelita, con el más vivo interés . . . ." Sí por cierto, es verdad; yo me interesaba vivamente por el desayuno de Adela, y . . . . pero ¿quién ha subrayado aquí tantas dicciones?

SILV. Usted que las ha escrito, será.

FAB. Yo, no, yo no he tirado raya ninguna.

ADE. Ah! ¿Si haria eso don Rufino cuando le dejé solo?

SILV. ¿No? Pues lea usted, lea usted lo rayado, y verá lo que sale.

FAB. (*Leyendo.*) "Adelita . . . . preciosa . . . . yo . . . . te . . . . amo . . . . inestimable . . . . perla . . . . yo . . . . te . . . . adoro." ¡Qué adulteracion! ¡Qué anacronismo!

ADE. ¿Luego usted no escribió con doble sentido ese billete?

FAB. ¿Cómo habia yo de componer de intento esos dos versos chabacanos que parecen de un aguador? Adelita, yo de palabra me explicaré mal, pero por escrito, ya es otra cosa. El que escribe puede corregir: ¡así se pudiera hablar de dos veces, una en borrador y otra en limpió![58] Yo no le hubiera escrito á secas á usted: "yo te amo," ni ¿cómo habia de haberme atrevido á tutear[59] á usted? Yo no me hubiera contentado con llamar ó usted "perla" sino "ángel, diosa, cielo."—¡Ah! perdone usted,

there is no doubt. (*Reads.*) "Adelita, with the most lively interest . . . . Yes, certainly, it is true; I was lively interested for Adela's breakfast, and . . . . But who has underscored so many words here?

SILV. It must be you who have written them.

FAB. I, no, I did not make any marks.

ADE. No? May Don Rufino have done this when I left him alone?

SILV. No? Well, read the underscored words, and you will see what comes out.

FAB. (*Reading.*) "Adelita . . . . precious . . . . I . . . . love . . . . thee . . . . inestimable . . . . pearl . . . . I . . . . adore . . . . thee." What adulteration! What anachronism!

ADE. Then you did not write this note with a double sense?

FAB. How could I have intentionally composed these two bungling verses that appear to be made by a water-carrier? Adela, speaking, I will explain myself badly, but writing is another thing. He who writes may correct: would to God we could speak twice, once in a rough copy, and again in a fair one! I could not have written to you simply: "I love thee;" nor how could I have dared to thou you? I could not have been content with calling you "pearl;" but "angel," "goddess,"

ahora caigo en que nos estamos queriendo por equivocacion.

ADE. Aun por eso[60] iba usted á aconsejarme que aceptara la mano de mi primo. Como usted no me queria . . . .

FAB. Lo mismo que usted.[61] Si hubiera estado decidido en mi favor, no me hubiera pedido consejo sobre lo que habia de hacer.

SILV. Por dicha, el desengaño ha venido pronto; y al cabo, si ustedes se han querido por impulso ajeno, dueños son[62] de quererse por su voluntad.

FAB. Ya es imposible.

ADE. ¿Por . . . .?

FAB. Porque si don Rufino se casa con la vieja, la herencia es de usted; y yo no puedo ni debo querer sino á una mujer . . . . como yo.

ADE. ¿Què no sea coja?

FAB. Que no sea rica.

ADE. ¡Eh! calle usted y no diga desatino.

SILV. Aquí viene el falsificador de cartas y viejas.

"heaven." Ah! pardon, I now understand that we are loving each other by mistake.

ADE. And that is the reason why you were going to advise me to accept my consin's hand? As you did not love me . . . .

FAB. Just like you. Had you been decided in my favor, you had not asked my advice about what you ought to do.

SILV. Happily, the deception has been cleared promptly; and, at last, if you have loved each other by another's influence, you are free now to love each other by your own free will.

FAB. Now, it is impossible.

ADE. Why . . . . ?

FAB. Because, if Don Rufino marries the old lady, the inheritance is yours; and I neither can nor ought love a woman . . . . unless, she is like myself.

ADE. Not lame?

FAB. Not rich.

ADE. Eh! Be silent, and do not talk nonsense.

SILV. Here comes the counterfeiter of letters and old ladies.

ESCENA ULTIMA.

DON RUFINO, ADELA, DON FABIAN, DON SILVESTRE.

ADE. Señor primo....

SILV. Señor don Rufino....

FAB. Señor tira-líneas....

ADE. ¿A casa de quién me ha dirigido usted esta tarde?

SILV. ¿Sabe usted que no estoy acostumbrado á que nadie juegue conmigo?

FAB. Yo sí lo estoy, pero trato ya de perder la costumbre.

ADE. Usted no puede aspirar á mi mano; me constan[63] ya sus relaciones con doña Gertrúdis.

SILV. La de los galápagos de bronce, no la otra. Sepa[64] usted que la acabo de ver.

RUF. Lo sé ya, salir usted y entrar yo ha sido todo uno.

SILV. Lo creo, como que estando yo allí le envió á llamar á usted.

RUF. Sí, para hartarme de vituperios á consecuencia de las noticias que usted le dió, y para decirme en dos palabras que ajustásemos cuenta y buscase otra novia.

ADE. ¿Con que en efecto era novia de usted?

LAST SCENE.

DON RUFINO, ADELA, DON FABIAN, DON SILVESTRE.

ADE. Mr. Cousin . . . .

SILV. Mr. Don Rufino . . . .

FAB. Mr. Line-Drawer . . . .

ADE. To whose house did you send me this afternoon?

SILV. Do you know that I am not accustomed to let any man trifle with me?

FAB. I, indeed, am accustomed to it; but now I am trying to lose the custom.

ADE. You cannot aspire to my hand; I have already proof of your relations with Miss Gertrude.

SILV. She of the two tortoises of bronze, not the other. Be aware as I have just seen her?

RUF. I know it, your going out and my coming in have been all one.

SILV. I believe it, while I was there she sent for you.

RUF. Yes, to stuff me with abuse in consequence of the news you gave her, and to tell me in two words, that we must settle accounts, and I seek another betrothed.

ADE. So she was your betrothed?

RUF. Antes de conocer á usted, pensé en ella, lo confieso.

ADE. Y despues de concerme usted no ha pensado en mí, sino para engañarme.

FAB. Para engañarnos.

SILV. A los tres.

RUF. La ambicion me cegó; por ella aparté los ojos de usted y los puse en la herencia. De esto [65] ha nacido el dirigir hoy á usted á una doña Gertrúdis fingida.

SILV. Y por lo mismo habrá sido el suponer que Adela y don Fabian se querian.

RUF. Yo los creí muy dispuestos á ello, y traté de ponerlos de inteligencia. La prueba de que no me equivocaba, está en lo que me acaban de decir Gregoria y unos huéspedes, que les han escuchado á ustedes la convérsacion á oscuras.

ADE. (*Aparte.*) ¡Cielos!

FAB. Este hombre se ha empeñado [66] en que por fuerza nos hemos de amar.

RUF. Nada de eso; yo, á pesar de todo, estoy pronto á dar la mano á Adela, si quiere admitirla.

ADE. Nunca, se la doy al señor para cumplirle el gusto de casarse con pobre.

FAB. ¡Adela de mi vida!

SILV. (*A Adela.*) ¿Con que son para el señor los bienes del tio?

RUF. I confess that I thought of her before knowing you.

ADE. And, after knowing me, you have not thought of me, except to deceive me.

FAB. To deceive us.

SILV. All three.

RUF. Ambition blinded me; she made me turn my eyes from you, and I placed them on the inheritance. That is why I saw fit to direct you to a counterfeit Gertrude.

SILV. And, for the same cause perhaps, you have supposed that Adela and Don Fabian loved each other.

RUF. I believed them well disposed to it, and I tried to make them agree. The proof that I was not mistaken is in what I have just been told by Gregoria and several guests, who listened to their conversation in the dark.

ADE. (*Aside.*) Heavens!

FAB. This man has earnestly determined that we must love each other by force.

RUF. No more of this; I, in spite of all, am ready to give my hand to Adela, if she is willing to accept it.

ADE. Never, I give it to this gentleman in order to satisfy his desire of marrying a poor woman.

FAB. Beloved Adela!

SILV. (*To Adela.*) So the estate of your uncle will go to that gentleman?

RUF. Mi prima se obstina en ello: ¿qué le he de hacer?

ADE. Sí, guárdeselos usted, y ¡ojalá mis circunstancias me permitiesen rehusar la pension á que tengo derecho, [67] para no tener que agradecer ni un maravedí [68] al difunto don Gabriel Garay!

FAB. (*A Adela.*) ¿Como, don Gabriel Garay? ¿Era ese su tio de usted?

ADE. Tio del señor.

FAB. ¿Natural de Oviedo? ¿casado con doña Verónica Gomez?

RUF. El mismo.

SILV. El propio.

FAB. Ese tambien era mi tio.

RUF. ¿De usted?

ADE. *y Silv.* ¿De usted?

RUF. No puede ser, solo tenia un subrino llamado Ramon.

FAB. El Ramon soy yo.

RUF. Si se llama usted Fabian.

FAB. De ese responderá el alcalde del barrio

SILV. A don Ramon le mataron los facciosos.

FAB. Es una calumnia, no hicieron más que darme una paliza y dejarme por muerto.

SILV. ¿Con que los novios son primos políticos? Don Rufino de mi alma, le acompaño á usted en el sentimiento de la pérdida.[69]

RUF. My cousin is obstinate in this, what can I do?

ADE. Yes, keep it, and would to God my circumstances permitted me to refuse the annuity to which I am entitled, that I might not have to thank the late Don Gabriel for even a cent!

FAB. (*To Adela.*) How, Don Gabriel Garay? Was this man your uncle?

ADE. Uncle of that gentleman.

FAB. Native of Oviedo? Married with Miss Veronica Gomez?

RUF. The same.

SILV. The very one.

FAB. This man was also my uncle.

RUF. Yours?

ADE. and SILV. Yours?

RUF. It cannot be, he had only one nephew, named Ramon.

FAB. I am the Ramon.

RUF. But your name is Fabian.

FAB. The Alcalde of the district will answer for that.

SILV. The insurgents killed Don Ramon.

FAB. It is a false report; they did nothing more than to give me a cudgeling, and leave me for dead.

SILV. Then, are the lovers cousins? My dear Don Rufino, I mourn with you for your loss.

RUF. Dèjeme usted en paz.

FAB. ¿Como? ¿que es eso?

ADE. Que el señor se ha quedado sin doña Gertrúdis y sin la herencia del tio; casasdo yo con un pariente suyo, es legítimamente mia, y el primo Rufino me ha comprometido á casarme con el primo Ramon.

FAB. ¿De modo que Adela se quedaba pobre por mí, y por mí vuelve á ser rica? Prima novia,[70] en paz, [71] y jugando.

SILV. *Dando una palmado en el hombro á don Rufino.*) ¿Qué dice usted á eso?

RUF. Que me he lucido.

ADE. Queda usted convidado á mi boda, y le reservo el primer rigodon.

FAB. ¿Bailas con muletas?

ADE. La muleta duerme ésta noche en el pozo. (*Corre ágilmente al pozo y la tira.*)

FAB. ¡Qué veo!

RUF. ¡No era coja!

SILV. ¿Què habia de ser? En mi familia, nadie anda en malos pasos.

FAB. ¿Qué ha sido esto?

ADE. Un capricho para ver si me querian por mí y no por la herencia.

FAB. ¡Canario! ¡qué esposa se ha perdido usted, primo!

RUF. Leave me in peace.

FAB. How? What is this?

ADE. That the gentleman is left without Miss Gertrude, and without the inheritance of his uncle; if I marry a kinsman of his, it is lawfully mine, and Cousin Rufino obliged me to marry Cousin Ramon.

FAB. So that Adela was going to be poor for me; and now, for me is going to become rich? Cousin, betrothed, in playing, we are even.

SILV. (*Slapping Don Rufino's shoulder.*) What say you to that?

RUF. That I have exceeded myself.

ADE. You are invited to my wedding, and I reserve the first minuet for you.

FAB. Do you dance with a crutch?

ADE. The crutch sleeps this night in the well. (*She runs nimbly to the well, and throws it in.*)

FAB. What do I see?

RUF. She is n't lame!

SILV. How could she be? In my family, no one makes false steps.

FAB. What does all this mean?

ADE. A caprice of mine to see if I was loved for myself, and not for the inheritance.

FAB. Heavens! What a wife you have lost, cousin!

RUF. Hombre, no me lo diga usted otra vez, si no quiere que vaya á echarme tras la muleta. (*A Adela.*) ¡Quéjese usted de mis trapisondas, despues de habernos engañado á todos de una manera tan atroz!

FAB. Yo no me quejo.

ADE. Mi engaño es de mejor índole que los de usted. Yo deseaba cariño y usted dinero; por usted he reunido ambas cosas. En recompensa, se le pagarán á usted sus deudas y se le cederá la pension.

FAB. Llegó el punto en que se vea (*Al público.*)
Si agradó nuestra fatiga,
Y falle el concurso y diga
De qué pié el drama cojea.
¿Habrá aplausos ó marea?
En medio de tal afan,
Sufra el público galan
Que al fin de esta decimilla
Parodie una seguidilla
Que todos conocerán.
"Como tengo este genio
Tan encogido . . . .
Bien quisiera un aplauso
Mas no le pido."

FIN.

RUF. Man, do not speak to me again, if you do not want me to throw myself after the crutch. (*To Adela.*) Now, complain of my tricks, after having cheated us all in such an atrocious manner!

FAB. I do not complain.

ADE. My deceit is of a better character than yours. I desired love, and you money; through you, I have attained both. In recompense, your debts will be paid, and the annuity will be transfered to you.

FAB. (*To the audience.*)

The point now is reached,
  At which 't will be seen,
If our labor has pleased you,
  If to favor you lean;
And whether the public
  Approving will say,
On what foot now limps
  This comedy play.
At the end, will the audience
  In this anxious time,
Permit me to parody
  A gay Spanish rhyme:
"By nature so bashful
  As not to aspire,
Although I ask nothing,
  Applause I desire."

FINIS.

NOTES.

ACT THE FIRST.

1. *Salir* in stage directions always signifies to enter.
2. *Don*, Spanish title for gentleman, and always joined to Christian name.
3. *Tendrán*, the future is frequent in Spanish where only the present is admissible in English.
4. *Han dado hace rato*, it has long ago struck half past ten.
5. I have preserved the diminutive form without attempting a translation.
6. From *despedir*.
7. *Beso á usted la mano:* I kiss the hand to you: my compliments, Sir.
8. *Cojo*, past def. from *coger*.
9. *De nuevo*, anew; in this connection; again.
10. *Por Dios*, simply an exclamation in Spanish.
11. Lit., he has put himself colored.
12. *Haga*, pres. sub. from *hacer*. Note use of subjunctive.
13. *Yendo*, pres. part. from *Ir*.
14. *A no ser*, except.
15. *Por supuesto*, of course.
16. *Cuanto hay que ser*, whatever there is to be: all what a man can be.
17. *Ama de llaves*, mistress of keys: housekeeper: landlady.
18. *No sirve para nada*, the double negative is peculiar to the Latin languages.
19. The masculine form (as in English) is used where persons of both sexes are included.
20. *El tio me importa á mí dos bledos;* lit., the uncle does not matter to me two straws.

21. *Ya se ve*, it is seen at once, it is natural.
22. *Primos políticos ;* lit., cousins-in-law. A good illustration of the definiteness of the Spanish language.
23. A Spanish idiom which means to take possession of both things : here, the cousin and the fortune.
24. *Mirarme con buenos ojos :* to look at me with straight eyes; and it may also be translated: to regard me with affection.
25. That is, in the desert.
26. *Por cierto*, therefore.
27. *A pesar de*, in spite of.
28. *Todo era uno*, it was all one; was the same thing.
29. *Leyes*. Note the frequent use of the plural in Spanish where only the singular is admissible in English.
30. *El mismo Abel*, Abel himself.
31. *Quisiera*, conditional from *querer*.
32. *Consigo*, 1st. per. sing. of *conseguir*.
33. *Los españoles pecamos por lo comun*, the Spaniards generally sin, etc.
34. *De povecho*, worthy.
35. *De balde*, gratis; free of expense.
36. *No puede ser*, cannot be; is impossible.
37. *A todo correr*, all told.
38. *Que miren á derechas*, who look perfectly; who possess straight eyes.
39. *Algo*, an abreviation of *alguno*, which is a contraction of the Latin *aliquis unus*.
40. *Manzanilla*, a brand of Spanish wine; but it also means chamounille.
41. *Cañita*, a long slim glass used in Spain, especially for drinking this kind of wine.
42. *Primo político*, cousin-in-law. Rufino belonged to the uncle's branch of the family while Adela to his wife's.
43. *Pero sabe serlo*, but he knows how to be such.
44. *Lo de amable*, that of amiability.
45. *El plazo urge ;* lit., the term presses forward.

46. *Tio político;* lit., uncle-in-law.
47. *Six thousand reals*, equal to about three hundred dollars.
48. *De manera que*, so that.
49. *No suele tener más que;* lit., is not accustomed to have more than.
50. *Sé*, Pres. Imperative from *ser*.
51. *Ya se ve*, it is seen; it is clear.
52. *Marido calavera*, profligate husband.
53. *A todo el mundo*, to all the world; to every one.
54. *Conviene en casarse*, decides to marry you.
55. *Quebrado de cabeza*, some object of affection.
56. *Juan Lanas*, a fictitious Spanish character, meaning a simpleton.
57. *Dichos*, referring to Adela and Silvestre. Note use of the masculine form in designating persons of different sexes.
58. *Siquiera*, at least, but must be taken in a freer sense here.
59. *Donde anda*, where does he go; where is he.
60. *En cambio*, in exchange; instead.
61. *Me he hecho la desentendida;* lit., I have made myself the ignorant one.
62. Note the especial meaning of *salir* in stage directions, and see NOTE I.
63. *Haremos la deshecha*, let me keep in the shadow, or let me dissemble.
64. *Juzgué que sí*, I thought so, I thought you were.
65. *Al golpe*, at once.
66. *Rejas*, the iron grate or railing of a window.
67. *De dar la vuelta y pasar adelante*, to turn round and come in.
68. *Sin novedad*, without incident, very well.
69. *Supongo*, pres. ind. from *suponer*.
70. *Espíritu*, mettle.
71. *Otra*, fem. Referring to Miss Gertrude.
72. *Pues algo hay de eso*, well, there is something of that.
73. *Anda en*, going into.
74. *Supuesto que*, allowing that; granting that; since that.

75. *Al instante*, right away; directly.
76. *Qué tal parecer?* How does she look?
77. *De figura*, person, in the sense of form or figure.
78. *Yo no tengo por buenos*, I consider no good.
79. *Por un ojo de la cara*, freely, for any price.
80. *Antes*, rather.
81. *No hay por qué*, there is no occasion for that.
82. *Por lo mismo*, on that account. Best implied than translated here.
83. *Abur*, good day.
84. *Rebuenos*, doubly good.
85. *No se le vierta*, may not spill it.
86. *Le decia mil tempestades;* lit., I would say a thousand tempests.
87. *Mantilla*, a head covering of Spanish women.
88. *Gesto*, grimace.
89. *Flaco servicio*, bad limb.
90. *Tiene gracia la cojita*, is she not cunning, or is not the little lame one cunning?
91. *Digo la afinidad*, I mean relationship.
92. *Sentir*, to be sorry; to feel deeply.
93. *Alce*, past. def. from *alzar*.
94. *Supiese*, sub. imp. from *saber*.
95. *Reniega*, pres. ind. from *renegar*.
96. *Ya no puede sufrir*, now, he cannot bear me.
97. *Apuesto*, pres. ind. from *apostar*.
98. *¿Cómo le cata yo en ojos?* Lit., how could I give it him in his eyes.
99. That is, like a red pepper-pod.
100. *Vuelvo*, pres. ind. from *volver*.

ACT THE SECOND.

1. *Velador*, a small table on which a light is placed.
2. *No le hace;* lit., it does n't matter.
3. *Dije*, past. def. from *decir*.

4. *Quiera*, sub. pres. The Sub. expresses actions, not as actually existing, but as possible, likely, or plausible. In such cases, *que* with a verb is the only construction admissible in Spanish. In English, the infinitive would usually be employed.
5. *Criatura*, means creature in all the significations of the English word.
6. *Hará cosa de un año ;* lit., it makes a thing of a year.
7. *De cuando en cuando*, from time to time.
8. *No me da buena espina*., lit, does not give me a good thorn.
9. *Hombre de bien*, an honest man.
10. *Bien que*, although.
11. A Spanish expression signifying that he may turn up at any moment.
12. *Relationes de intereses*, business relations.
13. *Dispuesto*, past. part. from *disponer*.
14. *De hoy á mañana*, from to-day to to-morrow.
15. *Por eso*, therefore.
16. *Aturde tambien*, you also make me giddy.
17. *Estar de vuelta*, to have returned.
18. *Señores*, where two sexes are included the masculine form is used. See NOTE 19 in Act I.
19. *Cuatro*, four, in the sense of, a few.
20. *De decir misa*, Early Mass is attended before breakfast.
21. *Real de vallon*, or *real* is equal to about five cents, while *un real de plata* is equal to about ten cents.
22. *Las once*, lunch.
23. *Pusieron*, past. def. from *poner*.
24. *Dónde lo hay bueno*, where there is good.
25. *Un topo*, a mole ; a short-sighted person.
26. *Nada columbro*, I discern nothing at a distance ; I descry. nothing.
27. *Por*, followed by *que* and the subjunctive is translated : however, however much, or although.
28. *Por la impression de la primera vez se suele amar*, one may love through the impression made at first sight.

29. *Es que*, but.
30. *Friolera*, best translated by, paltry, in this connection.
31. *Me he de prometer*, must I promise myself; will I promise myself.
32. *Me ha birlado la plaza*, has cut me out.
33. *Para casarse se necesita quererse*, lit.: In order to be married, there is need of being loved.
34. *Prueba al canto*, the proof is evident.
35. *Hombre de Dios*, saintly man.
36. *Hombre de honor y vergüenza*, an honorable and modest man.
37. *La venera*, vein in a mine, but here the height of your dignity.
38. *Rindiera*, cond. sub. from *rendir*.
39. *Papel*, part., that is the character one may play or act.
40. *Yo de buena gana le diría que no*, I would rather tell him, no.
41. *Es decir*, that is to say; that means.
42. *Galan* is a term used in the Spanish theater to designate the actor who plays the part of the lover, while the actress is called *dama*.
43. *Falta ver*, lit. it is wanting to see.
44. *Cosas*, whims.
45. Note that *negocios*, business, has a plural form in Spanish, hence *los*, referring to *negocios*, is found in the plural.
46. *Cumple*, is fulfilled.
47. *Paladar muy delicado*, very fastidious taste.
48. *Es que usted*, but you.
49. *En limpio*, in short; in two words.
50. *Es usted muy dueño*, you are quite welcome; you are at liberty to do so.
51. *Lo cierto es*, what is certain, is.
52. *Vine*, past. def. from *venir*,
53. *Fué*, past. def. from *ir*.
54. *De fijo*, surely.
55. *A medias*, by halving.
56. *Esto marcha*, this goes well.

57. *Para desdecirse*, for recanting.
58. *Las señas*, her address.
59. *Cartera*, letter-case; pocket-book.
60. *El recado de escribir*, portfolio, or writing desk, or anything for writing.
61. *He de sonsacar*, I will pump the secret out.
62. If that person were not wholly (absolutely) indifferent to me.
63. *La más leve ensinuacion*, the lightest hint.
64. *Malogrado*, killed in the bud; failed of success.
65. *Cucurucho*, coil of paper; a paper parcel.
66. *A humo de pajas*, on the ground of straws; without cause
67. *No podía ménos de serme*, could not help being.
68. *¿ Qué tal ?* what next! Also used by familiar friends in greeting each other, equivalent to, how are you?
69. *Lonja*, warehouse, in this sense, store.
70. *El comerciante*, the merchant. Here the meaning is, the grocer.
71. That is, goes from the stage through the sitting-room.
72. *Más partido*, more profit.
73. ! *Calle !* Be silent! Hold on!
74. *Rayo*, prest. ind. from *rayar*, while *raya* is a noun meaning, mark.
75. *Prosa galana*, florid prose.
76. *Vaya usted con Dios*, may God go with you; farewell.
77. *Desempeñar*, to undo, or break up the pavement.
78. *Ya*, indeed; or yes.
79. *Como yo de él*, lit. As I of him.
80. *Mírala ahora ;* lit., look now.
81. *No haya duda*, there may remain no doubt.
82. *Sin hacer añicos ese papel ;* lit., without making that paper small pieces.
83. *Persona*, is feminine, hence *ella*. Reference is here to Fabian.
84. *La tercera del amor*, a go-between with love.
85. Equivalent to: He has a tight hold of you; lit., he has seized you by the foot.

86. *Pues bien*, very well.
87. *De calabazas*, means in Spanish, to make a rebuff.
88. *No hay que darle vueltas*, no roundabout ways.
89. *Le prevenga*, warn him.
90. *Por mi causa*, on my account.

ACT THE THIRD.

1. *A contárselo todo*, to tell you everything.
2. *Habitacion*, primary meaning, apartment.
3. *Allá en mis adentros*, there within; within myself, there.
4. *Hacía cuenta*, made calculation; intended.
5. *Hecho su papel*, played her part.
6. *Con arreglo á mi plan*, according to my plan.
7. *Enhoramala*, in an evil hour; disdainfully.
8. *Aún no está hecha*, is not yet realized.
9. *Por*, before an objective; however, or, as.
10. *A explicarse*, to unfold themselves.
11. *Garlito*, snare.
12. *Hace poco*, a short time ago.
13. *Qué sé yo como*, I do not know what that is. I do not know her family name.
14. *De donde*, by what way; how.
15. *En*, going before a gerund is equal to *luego que ;* or *despues que*.
16. *Aceche*, keep an eye on.
17. *Corrient* from *correr*, (Metaphorically). To take the proper course.
18. *Eso querrá decir*, that will be to say; that should mean.
19. *Cerradura*, door-lock.
20. *Mordaza*, gag.
21. *Majadero*, bore.
22. *Señorita de modo*, lady of dignity.
23. *Bien mirado*, well esteemed.
24. *Patizambo*, bandy-legged.
25. *Va á creer*, she will believe.

26. *Vaya*, well; undoubtedly. A sort of implied assent here.
27. *Tratar*, to treat, to discern. The word has wide latitude; here, to speak.
28. *Farol de reverbero;* reflector.
29. *De veras*, really.
30. *Los recursos propios*, our own resources.
31. *Los ajenos*, those of others.
32. *No tardará*, he will not delay; he will come soon.
33. *Al otro dia*, on the next day.
34. *A hacer á usted presente*, to call your attention.
35. *Ya se ve*, naturally.
36. *Tia mia carnal*, is a sister of one's mother or father, while *tía mia política*, is the wife of a brother of one's mother or father.
37. *Seis mil reales*, three hundred dollars. See NOTE Act II, No. 21.
38. *El peor*, superlative of *mal*.
39. *Triste pension*, mean annuity.
40. *Yo estaba en la intelligencia*, I was under the impression.
41. *Es que*, but.
42. *Huye*, pres. ind., from *huir*.
43. *En cuatro dias*, in a few days.
44. *Tantos peros*, so many buts.
45. *Todo el mundo*, everybody.
46. *Siempre que*, provided that.
47. *Sacar los piés de las alforjas;* lit., to take one's feet from the saddle-bags. A Spanish proverb.
48. *Teniendo tú aquí tan buena ocupacion;* lit., you, having here so good employment.
49. *A quintal* is one hundred pounds.
50. *Altona*, enormous as to height.
51. *Víste mal*, dresses shabbily.
52. *Puerta del Sol*, formerly the ancient gates of the city stood there; now a *plaza*.
53. *Por más señas*, as a better sign.
54. *Por allí*, near there; in the same place.
55. *Poco á poco*, do not be so quick, little by little.

56. *Y á ninguno de los dos le habla pasado por la imaginacion* lit. and to neither one of the two had it passed through the imagination.
57. *A ver*, frequently used as *vámos*, let us see, or let me see.
58. *En limpio*, in a fair one (copy.)
59. *Tutear*, to thou, i. e. to use *tu*, the familiar word, instead of *usted*.
60. *Aún por eso*, and that is the cause why.
61. *Lo mismo que usted*, just like you.
62. *Dueños son*, you are free now; you are masters.
63. *Me constan ya sus relaciones;* lit., your relations are already known to me.
64. *Sepa*, imp. from *saber*.
65 *De esto*, that is why; for this reason.
66. *Se ha empeñado*, earnestly determined.
67. *Tengo derecho*, I am entitled.
68. *Maravedí*, a small Spanish coin, now in disuse.
69. *Le acompaño á usted en el sentimiento de la pérdida*, lit., I join with you in sympathy for your loss.
70. *Novia*, in Spain the lady is called a bride as soon as she is betrothed.
71. *En paz*, in peace. Signifies here we are even, or we are square.